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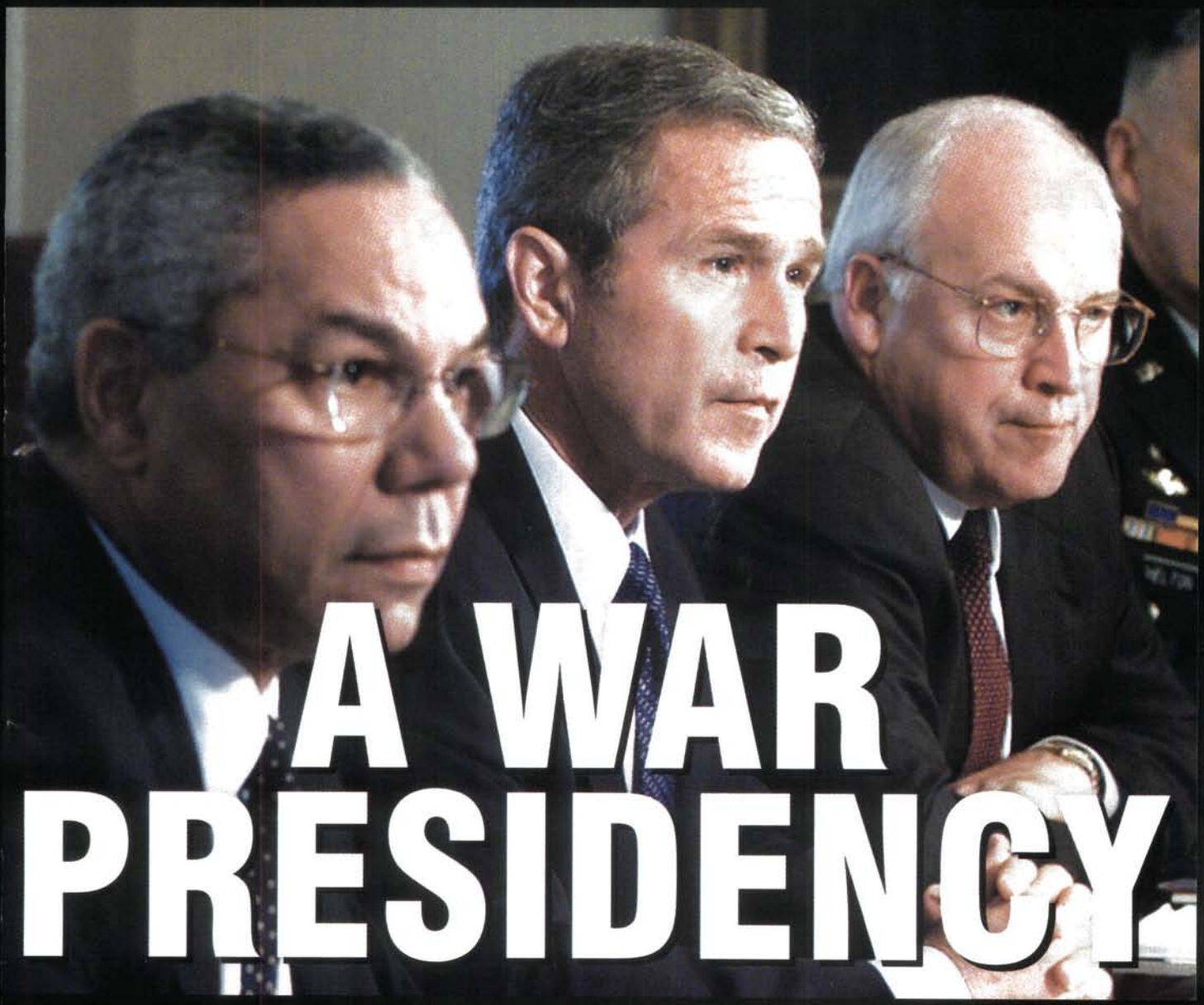

A WAR PRESIDENCY

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Robert Kagan & William Kristol
Gary Schmitt & Tom Donnelly • David Tell

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THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the last week in April, the second week in July, the first week in September, and the second week in January) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-850-682-7653 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. For a copy of THE WEEKLY STANDARD Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. THE WEEKLY STANDARD Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call Ian Slatter 1-202-496-3354. Copyright 2001, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in THE WEEKLY STANDARD may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. THE WEEKLY STANDARD is a trademark of News America Incorporated.

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They Shoot Photographers, Don't They?

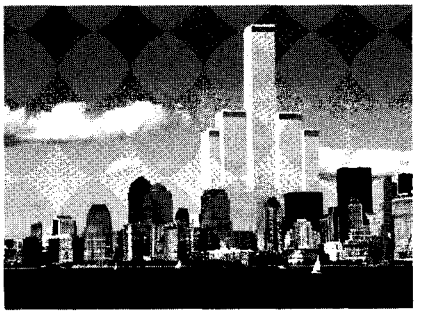
Perhaps the most disgusting images following the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were the ones of Palestinian men, women, and children dancing in the streets in east Jerusalem, celebrating the death of thousands of Americans, yelling, "God is great," and enjoying some celebratory sweets.

The jarring scenes—so at odds with the familiar images of aggrieved Palestinian victimhood that are a staple of international news broadcasts—infuriated Americans, and, for a different reason, the Palestinian Authority. Frantic apologists for Yasser Arafat, who have spent years toiling in the propaganda vineyards, saw their long work souring before their eyes. Yasser Arafat rushed off to give blood for shipment to America—and the gesture got him almost no credit. By the end of the week, though, some media sympathizers were cluck-clucking that too much had been made of this footage, that the video is atypical—that, after all, we have been shown the same images over and over.

But there's a good reason for this last fact, that also does no credit to the Palestinian Authority. Anyone who tried to film or photograph cheering Palestinians after that first disastrous bit of footage was released might have gotten himself killed. Hence AP footage of similar celebrations in Nablus was never released.

According to the AP, which protested to the Palestinian Authority, Arafat-allied Tanzim militia made death threats to an AP cameraman who recorded the Nablus footage. "Several Palestinian Authority officials spoke to AP in Jerusalem urging that the material not be broadcast. Ahmed Abdel Rahman, Arafat's cabinet secretary, said the Palestinian Authority 'cannot guarantee the life' of the cameraman if the footage was broadcast." This is why no one has yet seen the AP's video of the Nablus rally, which reportedly numbered 4,000.

The only thing atypical about the video that was shown was that it somehow managed to escape the censorship-by-death-threat that the Palestinian Authority otherwise imposes on unflattering photography. ♦



A New World Trade Center?

Forwarded to THE SCRAPBOOK's e-mail, and no doubt to millions of others by now, was an unknown artist's rendition of a possible replacement for the fallen towers. Whatever its technical limitations might be, we thought the work admirably reflected the combination of pluck and defiance under fire that makes the American character the envy of the world. It's reproduced above for the enjoyment of readers who are not yet online. ♦

The *Times*'s Bad Timing

Lots of people said and wrote and published things in the days before September 11 that look foolish or tasteless or worse in retrospect. For the most part they deserve to pass in silence. But the *New York Times*'s crashingly tasteless profile of an American terrorist would have been egregious whenever it was published, and therefore deserves special mention. Dinitia Smith wrote the piece, which was headlined "No Regrets for a Love Of Explosives; In a Memoir of Sorts, a War Protester Talks of Life With the Weathermen." It appeared in Tuesday's paper, as the world was crashing in around America.

Some excerpts: "'I don't regret setting bombs,' Bill Ayers said. 'I feel we didn't do enough.' Mr. Ayers, who spent the 1970s as a fugitive in the Weather Underground, was sitting in the kitchen of his big turn-of-the-19th-century stone house in the Hyde Park district of Chicago. The long curly locks in his Wanted poster are shorn, though he wears earrings. He still has tattooed on his neck the rainbow-and-lightning Weathermen logo that appeared on letters taking responsibility for bombings. . . .

"He participated in the bombings of New York City Police Headquarters in 1970, of the Capitol building in 1971, the Pentagon in 1972. But Mr. Ayers . . . is probably safe from prosecution anyway. A spokeswoman for the Justice Department said there was a five-year statute of limitations on Federal crimes except in cases of murder or when a person has been indicted.

"Mr. Ayers, who in 1970 was said to have summed up the Weatherman philosophy as: 'Kill all the rich people. Break up their cars and apartments. Bring the revolution home, kill your parents, that's where it's really at,' is today distinguished professor of education at the University of Illinois at Chicago" et, ad nauseam, cetera. Mr. Ayers, by the way, claims that last part

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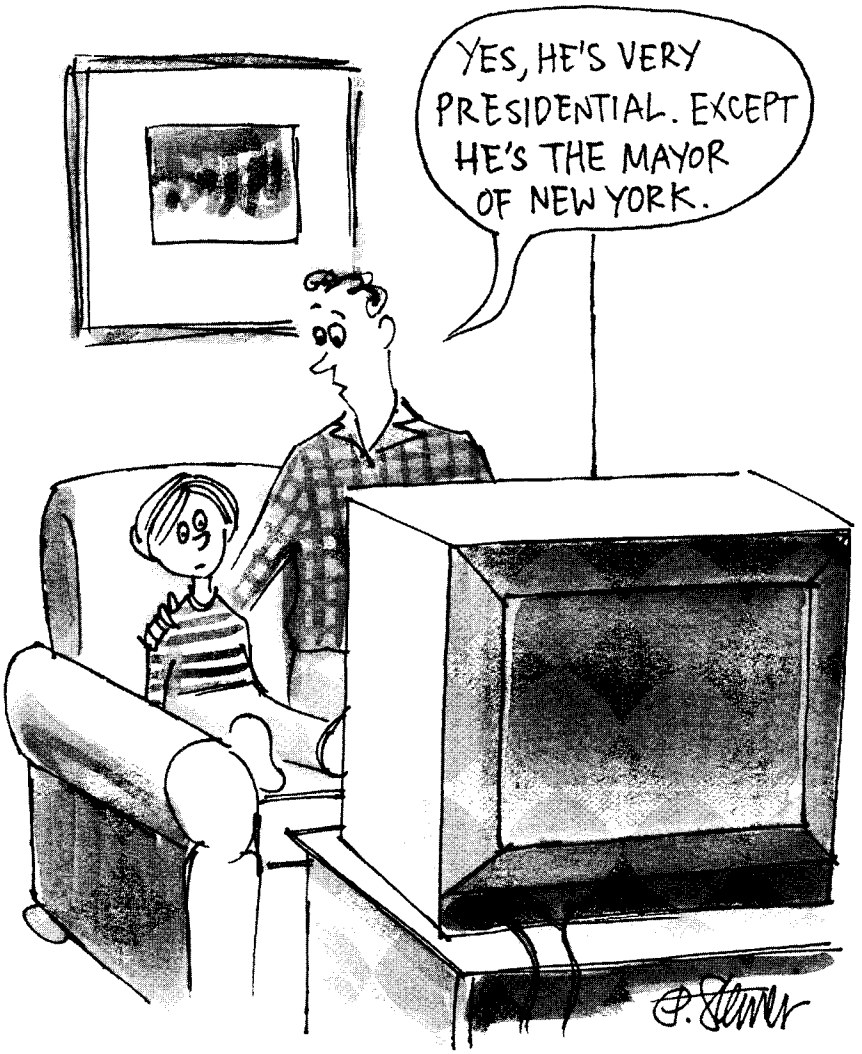

about killing rich people and parents was a joke. Ha ha, ha ha, ha ha. ♦

Blank Slate

The *Times* has the bare excuse that it couldn't know with what horrifying juxtaposition its bit of radical chic would land alongside shrapnel and ashes on Manhattan doorsteps. The sometimes barely edited *Slate*, on the other hand, distinguished itself by publishing the following musings from *New Yorker* theater critic John Lahr on September 12, the day after.

"Over the decades, I've become instinctively skeptical about the events that have burned themselves into our consciousness as watermarks of the era. We still don't really know who killed Kennedy or Martin Luther King; it took us a long time to find out the hidden agenda to the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Gulf of Tonkin 'incident,' which tipped us into Vietnam and a war we should never have fought.

"Perhaps it's eerie serendipity, perhaps it's my paranoia, but an acid thought keeps plaguing me. Isn't it odd that on the day—the DAY—that the Democrats launched their most blistering attack on 'the absolute lunacy' of Bush's unproven missile-defense system, which 'threatens to pull the trigger on the arms race,' what Sen. Biden calls today in the *Guardian*, his 'theological' belief in 'rogue nations,' that the rogue nation should suddenly become such a terrifying reality?

"The fact that I could even think such a thought says more to me about the bankruptcy and moral exhaustion of our leaders even in the face of a disaster where any action, in the current nightmare, will seem like heroism. But I do smell destabilizing violence in the wings. In fear, the nation, to my mind, has always proved mean-spirited and violent."

When Lahr writes of absolute lunacy and moral exhaustion, we think the fox smells his own hole. ♦

Soundbites Under Fire

Finally, full credit to Rep. Curt Weldon of Pennsylvania, whom we saw on CNN at around noon on Tuesday and who seemed better than anyone in those chaotic early hours to have grasped the sudden turn in American statecraft. "I asked the sergeant at arms of the Capitol just 45 minutes ago in a meeting with 70 senators and House members, how much advance notice did you have? He said, none. There was no intelligence. . . .

"This is a failure that was caused by a lack of resources and by a complacency that set in in America over the past 10 years, a complacency that convinced all of us that with the demise of the Soviet Union there were no more threats. It's a tragedy that it took the loss of thousands of lives to wake this country up and realize that our number one responsibility is not education (and I'm a teacher) and it's not health care (I'm married to a nurse)—it is in fact the security and the safety of the American people." ♦

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Casual

Their Shining Moment

"Some idiot just flew his plane into the World Trade Center," a friend told me over the phone, so I turned on the TV in time to see the second plane go into the south tower, and I watched the TV more or less constantly until late in the afternoon, when I took a break for a couple of hours before resuming my seat in front of the screen, and I stayed there, glassy-eyed, past one in the morning, much moved of course but also unexpectedly, deeply impressed.

I expend a large amount of professional energy snobbing television news, making fun of the people who practice it and the people who consume it, its bathos and hyperbole and its monstrous capacity to trivialize the essential and aggrandize the trivial. Nonfiction TV is boundlessly dumb; you might even say *invariably* dumb, were it not for a few sylvan glades of intelligence like the Food Channel and live coverage of professional bowling. TV news personalities are the surest figures of fun that American culture offers up. Perky Katie and lovable Matt, Bryant of the furrowed brow and Diane Sawyer biting her lip, not to mention your local twinkie anchors—television news is a fat target. It is a place where Charlie Rose is considered the house intellectual. The only deterrent to mocking it in print, in my experience, is that you have to watch some of it to do so.

But last Tuesday I took it all back. From the first morning moments when the screen filled with nightmare, the country's TV journalists handled the story with sobriety, professionalism, and taste. We now know, for example, that news organizations had in their possession film of terrified human beings jumping to their deaths; also of body parts flung across the rubble. Most networks, both broadcast and cable, declined to air the footage as it came in. There were very few of those sadistic interviews with surviving relatives desperate for word of the loved and lost. ("Can you tell us how you feel . . .")

AP / Wide World Photos

Exhibitionism and emotional manipulation were at a minimum, all day long. New information was offered as methodically as possible, with appropriate cautions about its reliability. The people called on to analyze events seemed, even on cable, to have at least the slightest idea what they were talking about; the gasbags that normally steam up *Hardball* and *Crossfire* must have been locked in the green room.

Of course some things were done wrong. The car bomb outside the State Department was a rumor that got too far; other errors tainted the information flow throughout the day. Television is a sub-verbal medium for the most part, so it wasn't much of a surprise when guests and anchors alike referred to the catastrophe as a "tragedy"—a useful word whose peculiar meaning has by now been blurred beyond rescue. But these are just quibbles against what must have been television journalism's finest hour.

As I went to bed Tuesday night I puzzled over why the medium at last had managed to rise to the occasion. The answer, I suppose, is that it had no choice. Ordinarily television news specializes in excess. The exaggerated gesture is its mode of speech. It squeezes torrents of tears from stories that barely rate a sniffle, it tries to hype the workaday into roller-coaster drama. The gap between reality and the artifices of TV news is what gives those pretty anchors and breathless reporters their unavoidably buffoonish air. But last Tuesday's events made a story that was impossible to hype. No gesture could seem exaggerated. This was genuine horror, unutterable sadness. All that TV news could do, faced with such a story, was tell it.

The shining moment couldn't last, and didn't. As the days wore on much of the news dried up. We became habituated to the horror. And so the artifices were put back in place. By the end of the week the morning shows filled the slackening minutes with the sadistic interviews, a parade of tortured souls ventilating their private grief for our pleasure. The evening news broadcasts succumbed and aired much of the ghastly footage. The gasbags of *Hardball* returned. Diane Sawyer went back to biting her lip, and Katie pushed the hair from her eyes and looked as if she might cry.

Andrew Ferguson

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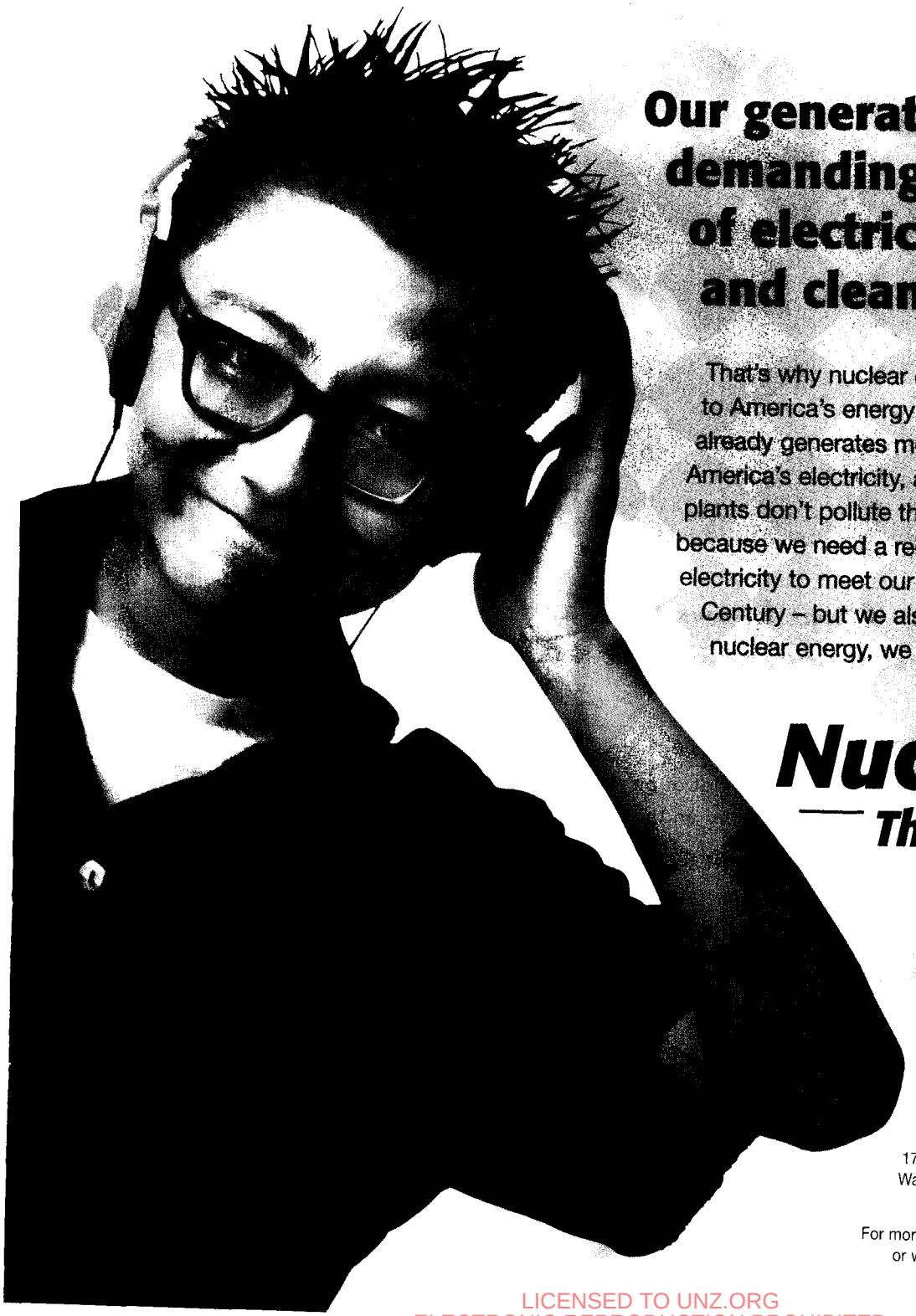

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A War to Win

The first thing that must be said is this: The nation has reacted magnificently to the horrific events of September 11. True, there has been some of the usual hand-wringing, on editorial pages and in Congress. To listen to some commentators, you'd think the Bush administration was about to embark on a mad orgy of international bloodletting, spraying bombs in all directions without rhyme or reason, save the lust for vengeance. Retired general Charles G. Boyd, for example, expressed his concern that the desire to "strike out in revenge" could "put us on the same moral footing" as the men who killed several thousand Americans this past Tuesday. Some in Congress were reluctant this week to give President Bush full authority for the use of force, lest he abuse the privilege and do something unthinkable.

In fact, such fears are entirely misplaced. The danger that the United States will lose its soul in the coming fight against terrorism is virtually nonexistent. But there is another, far more real danger: that we will return to complacency, that with the passage of time, and perhaps after a few, bloody skirmishes in this new war, the nation and its political leaders will gradually lose interest.

This may seem inconceivable at the moment. Right now, Americans and their political leaders seem prepared for the difficult struggle ahead. The administration appears to be embarking on a long, intensive, and purposeful offensive against terrorism. As Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz emphasized this past week, the administration is planning "a campaign, not a single action." The campaign will consist of "removing the sanctuaries, removing the support systems, ending states who sponsor terrorism." That will mean diplomatic pressure, and military action, against states found to be supporting terrorism—and perhaps sooner rather than later.

All this is encouraging. Right now, the United States appears to be girding itself for a protracted, dangerous, costly, but unavoidable conflict. But what about a month from now, when the networks have gone back to regular programming, the baseball playoff season begins, and the inevitable and appropriate partisanship returns? What about if some part of a military action goes wrong? What about a year from now? One of the great things about Americans is precisely how resilient we are. In time we will pick up the pieces and try to resume life as normal, and so we should. But the danger is that in returning to our normal lives, we may gradually forget this week's horrible lesson. Today Americans know we are at war. The question is, will we still remember why we must be at war—and why we must accept the price of war—tomorrow?

We raise this concern not because we believe America's present determination to make war on international terrorism must inevitably fade. The American people have in the past proven themselves capable of a sustained commitment. But the key to sustaining their commitment will be clear, steady, and vigorous political leadership, the kind provided by Franklin D. Roosevelt during World War II, by Harry Truman and Ronald Reagan during the difficult years of the Cold War, and by George Herbert Walker Bush during the Gulf War and, perhaps more important, during the long, difficult months leading up to the launching of Desert Storm. We trust George W. Bush will rise to the occasion. But he shouldn't have to do it alone. Members of Congress have a job to do, too. Whether they remain intently focused on the new war against terror will send a clear signal to the American people—not to mention America's bloody-minded enemies—of how serious we are about sustaining this war, and about paying the price for it.

The price will be substantial—not just in dollars, of course, but to start with, in dollars. If the administration intends seriously to pursue the strategy outlined this past week, we may soon find ourselves at war in one or more parts of the world. The possibility of engaging in some form of conflict in Afghanistan is now fairly high. Should evidence reveal some Iraqi, Iranian, Syrian, or other state support for last week's attack, the president will be confronted with the choice of taking military action or backing down. And if he does decide to go to war in the Middle East, he will still have to preserve American interests and defend American allies in Asia. Remember the two-war strategy the Pentagon just abandoned? Now it looks rather more realistic.

Given the serious shortfalls that are already plaguing our armed services, what this all adds up to is that we need to increase defense spending very substantially. Last week's $40 billion (about half of which appears to be for defense) is a start—but only a start. Failure to boost the defense budget by the necessary amount—and to make the case for the additional tens of billions that will be needed—will unacceptably limit the president's military options in the months and years to come. It will be a sign

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that we are not really serious about fighting this war.

There are other steps that should be taken immediately—some to prepare for the coming conflict, others to guard against any future attention-deficit syndrome. They require acting soon, while the national determination to respond is at its peak. And they require determined presidential and congressional leadership, not just at this moment of acute crisis but for the long term.

This brings us to a final point, about President Bush. He is not an inspirational leader, at least not yet. But contrary to what his political handlers seem to believe, this is not a fatal flaw. The nation is already inspired. The president can lead by doing. What he needs to convey to the American people, he can convey by how he wields his command.

The American people know and respect the fact that the president has surrounded himself with impressive, confidence-inspiring individuals, men like Dick Cheney, Colin Powell and Don Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Armitage. Bush should unleash them and let them help in the important task of leading the American people over the coming months and years. His has now become a war presidency; what matters is to win the war.

—Robert Kagan and William Kristol

A Nation Mobilized

There was much talk in Washington last week of the need for the government to reassure the nation. But it is not just reassurance the American public seeks from its leaders. To talk to people on the street, to listen to friends and relatives across the nation, is to hear something not heard in this country since Pearl Harbor. It sounds at times like the ancient pagan vengeance that would gladly slaughter its enemies and sow salt among their ruins. But that is, at last, only a weak and confused attempt to say something else—something we lack a vocabulary to express naturally these days. It has to do with honor, and it has to do with will. It is a national resolution to alter, redirect, and even surrender our lives to ensure that such evil should never again come against us.

Real war always has this effect. We have been called out of our trivial concerns. We have resigned our parts in the casual comedy of everyday existence. We live, for the first time since World War II, with a horizon once again. If only President Bush would issue the call, the recruiting offices of the armed services would be filled tomorrow. If only he would issue *some* call commensurate with our willingness, Americans would give freely—"The awful daring of a moment's surrender" of ourselves to a purpose, as T.S. Eliot described it, "Which an age of prudence can never retract."

No one imagines that the United States will do nothing. But a campaign merely of long-range attacks on terrorist camps and international sanctions—a campaign of missiles and lawyers—means the end of the America we love. Not only will it aggravate, as the truncated Gulf War aggravated, the evil it is meant to eliminate, but it will fritter away, perhaps forever, the potential of Americans to join in common purpose—the potential that is the definition of a nation.

There is a task to which President Bush should call us. It is the long, expensive, and arduous war to replace the government of each nation on earth that allows terrorists to live and operate within its borders.

The origin of the attacks on Washington and New York lies in the shadow world of men seemingly without countries. When members of the Irish Republican Army are discovered in Colombia advising a Communist revolutionary group after aiding Basque separatists trained in the camps of Islamic militants, we have mostly left behind a world of nation-states and intelligible geopolitics.

But we have not entirely left it behind, for this shadow world is finally parasitic on the real world of nations. Unwilling to attack their enemies directly, certain countries gain by allowing—and simultaneously denying responsibility for—independent forces striking from within their borders. It has been this way before. For two centuries, the Ottoman Empire let pirates sail from its North African ports to harass Europe's Mediterranean cities. Elizabeth I used English and Dutch privateers in much the same way against the Spanish. And, in every case, the removal of the base—a change in the country from which these men without countries operate—was the only solution that could be attempted.

That solution, a war to topple and replace the governments that allow terrorism, is once again the only solution. It will prove long and difficult. American soldiers will lose their lives in the course of it, and American civilians will suffer hardships. But that, too, is what real war looks like. And in the days since the first plane smashed into the World Trade Center the American people have shown their willingness to fight it—if only our leaders will lead us there.

—J. Bottum, for the Editors

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The End of Illusions

The united state of America. BY DAVID TELL

EVEN AS THE SKY was falling Tuesday morning, September 11, visitors to the *Nation* magazine's website could find a freshly posted essay by Edward Said on the intellectual's role in the modern world. A true intellectual, Said declared, now makes it his mission to publicize those injustices that are "occurring in reality"—like the Israeli "occupation" of Palestine. And this work is hard, for the "dominant discourse" has all but smothered reality in a blanket of "counterfeit universals" designed to "create consent and tacit approval." Indeed, Said noted, so thoroughly has the propaganda of "unseen power" penetrated popular consciousness that even some intelligent people have come to believe in its empty "confections": "the West" and "democracy," on the one hand, and "rogue states" and Middle Eastern "terrorism" on the other.

David Tell is opinion editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Now that two "confections," each carrying 20,000 gallons of liquid high-explosive, have flown across New York Harbor at 400 miles an hour and slaughtered 5,000 office workers (and counting) in the blink of an eye . . . well, how easy it becomes to forget that anyone in America once took seriously such arguments as these. That until recently, our custodians of respectable opinion, surveying the "dispute" between Arab suicide bombers and the Israeli schoolchildren whose blood they spilled, carefully constrained themselves to revile the sin but not entirely the sinner. That it was the policy of the United States government, in fact, to divvy up the equities just a bit—to insist that its friends in Jerusalem acknowledge, in the "sources" of antiquity, some claim to justice by the enemies at their gates.

No more, all gone, goodbye—vanished in the fireballs and, later that same day, in the television image of ululating hags and Palestinian Authority policemen in Nablus, dancing with joy on lower Manhattan's grave. It seems there is, after all, something very properly called Middle Eastern terrorism and something else, starkly different, very properly called the West. It seems the former means indiscriminately to kill anything associated with the latter—means to kill *us*. No, *has* killed us, and will no doubt eagerly kill us *again*, huge numbers of us at a time, given the slightest opportunity. What more bracing piece of information could there be than that? And who among us, having now absorbed it, is any longer susceptible to the imbecile morality of Edward Said's black-is-white dialectics—which would explicitly extenuate such obvious evil? No one, really. No one at all.

This unanimity itself bears inspection. Pearl Harbor is widely invoked as a historical parallel to last week's World Trade Center and Pentagon disasters. As a practical matter, the analogy is well short of perfect. But it is true, all the same, that one must

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reach back as far as December 1941—and reaches in vain any further—to find any other instance in which Americans, as with a single mind and heart, were led to think and feel the same things, with such clarity and conviction, about something so important. And in the space of an hour.

We fret a great deal these days that the nation isn't indivisible any more, that our "mosaic" is badly frayed, that we no longer know who we are. It turns out that is nonsense. At the moment, America fairly vibrates with an almost tribal sense of identity, a fraternal concern that can barely be contained. We know exactly who we are. And we love ourselves as we should and must. Had they been asked for direct and personal assistance in the New York rescue effort last week, millions of Californians would have set out across the continent immediately, even if they'd had to walk.

And so with our politics. They are "fractured," we tell ourselves, over and over. A giant crevice of ideology and partisanship has opened beneath our feet, so broad and deep that critical decision-making, by voters or their government, has become all but impossible. Has it, though? Honestly, now: Isn't it true that, from the moment we started lashing ourselves about this alleged incapacity, no genuinely critical decision has actually confronted the United States—until now? And isn't it true, too, that we have just managed to defy our own well-practiced pessimism not once or twice but three times in a matter of days?

Thus, the United States has announced that it considers terrorist attacks on its citizens and property an act of war, not a crime. The United States has announced that it will prosecute this war unilaterally if need be. The United States has announced that its targets are not simply the men directly responsible for mass murders in New York City and Arlington, Virginia—but any group or government that has supported or sustained them, *and any group or government inclined to support or sustain others like them in the future*. Each of these announcements represents a striking and hugely consequential departure from past policy and practice. And the entire exercise has been effected without ordinary public debate. Not because debate was suppressed or obscured by the emotion of the moment. But because debate was unnecessary. We are all thinking the same things, and reaching the same conclusions, and all by ourselves, individually, at lightning speed. Imagine: American politics is operating with supra-normal efficiency and effectiveness at the moment.

But not without self-doubt. The educated man mistrusts his passions, however appropriate, and the democratic man mistrusts consensus, however perfectly reasoned. No course of politics is ever entirely right, we figure, so we have already begun looking for errors at the margin, even prospective ones so improbable as to approach the ludicrous. It won't do indiscriminately to bomb Arabs overseas, or to lynch those of Arab descent who are our fellow citizens here at home, or to purchase the heightened security we need by mortgaging the First and Fourth Amendments—so we murmur in the op-ed pages of our leading newspapers. Odd that we should insult ourselves this way, cautioning against misdeeds that none of us has even contemplated. In the movie version, perhaps, martial law would be declared and nukes would drop. But this is not a movie, and the United States has no reason whatsoever to suspect that the real-life hero's role it now assumes might wobble into ambiguity.

This is nothing close to Pearl Harbor, when you get right down to it. We are not the unarmed and inexperienced America of 1941; we are a global colossus.

Nor should President Bush, as he embarks on the Good War of a new century, have serious cause to fear that he will fail the standards established in the last. They are the wrong standards, in any case: This is nothing close to Pearl Harbor when you get right down to it. We are not the unarmed and inexperienced America of 1941; we are a global colossus. We are stunned and mourning, but we are not for a moment afraid of defeat. We do not need to hear, as White House counselor Karen Hughes bizarrely reassured us last Tuesday, that "your government continues to function"—for who among us worried that the government was broken? We do not need to hear from Bush himself that "my resolve is steady and strong"; we expect and demand as much. We really don't need to hear anything but the news, in fact. Rooseveltian eloquence would be almost frivolous at this point. Where America might be led, she has already arrived on her own.

Behind us, in a pre-formed coalition, stands the civilized world—the West. Before us are our enemies, and they are . . . what? In the first hours after the towers fell in Manhattan, television analysts narrowed the list of likely suspects by repeatedly dubbing their operation "sophisticated." The usage was spectacularly misapplied. A group of men truly intent on the massacre of innocents can usually pull it off. What distinguishes them is not their "sophistication," but instead—and simply—their willingness to do it. It is an impulse unique to barbarians. And in the present circumstance, we know with all necessary precision who the barbarians are, who their friends are, and where they live. Most of all, we know that they will conduct some future massacre—or massacres—unless we destroy them first.

So we will destroy them. And we have only to worry that we will slow ourselves down by worrying overmuch about how. ♦

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W. Stands for War

A new beginning for the Bush presidency.

BY FRED BARNES

PRESIDENT BUSH did not become a war president on the day of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. It happened the next morning. Bush was sitting in the Cabinet Room at the White House between Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of State Colin Powell. At 10:53 A.M. the president, looking somber, leaned forward to read a statement. Often Bush is tongue-tied and struggles for words. This time he spoke crisply and forcefully. Acts of war had been committed, he said. "The United States of America will use all our resources to conquer this enemy. . . . It is not business as usual." As reporters were led out of the room, Bush was asked if he would seek a declaration of war. Bush didn't answer, flinch, or look up. He sat stonily.

The first requirement of a war president is to assure the nation he's in charge. And Bush's three-minute soliloquy put him on the way to meeting it. His comments to the press the next day brought him further. The media had been summoned to the Oval Office to observe a staged phone conversation between Bush and New York governor George Pataki and New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani. The phone chat fell flat, but Bush's response to press questions afterwards didn't. Eradicating terrorism "is now the focus of my administration," he said. "Now is an opportunity to do generations a favor by coming together and whipping terrorism, hunting it down, finding it and holding [terrorists] accountable." A day later—Friday, three days after the attacks—Bush addressed a prayer service, now more confident in his role as a war president. America has "a responsibility to history: to answer these attacks."

Being in charge, of course, isn't the only test of an effective war president. There are two others. One is bringing events under control and restoring stability and a reasonable amount of calm. The other is crafting a strategy that's likely to work, plus the will to carry it out. The model for meeting

AP/Wide World Photos

all three requirements is Bush's father, President George H.W. Bush, in Desert Storm. The negative model is President Jimmy Carter in the Iranian hostage crisis. He fell short on all three counts.

George W. Bush stumbled on day one in establishing himself as a man in charge, comfortable as commander in chief. But it could have been worse. Security officials wanted him to spend the night outside Washington. After stopping at two air force bases and dropping off a taped statement to the nation, Bush insisted on returning to the White House, despite the risk. Bush's taped message was weak. He looked harried and unsure. That night from the Oval Office, his speech was marginally better. The president looked stiff, gesticulated in a wooden manner, and failed to create the impression he's up to the task ahead. The feedback from Republicans on Capitol Hill, outside advisers, and even some White House aides was less than positive. Bush hadn't risen to the occasion.

Neither did his father on day one of Desert Storm. Bush senior initially put out a wishy-washy statement, then told reporters he wasn't considering the use of military force (even though he was). It wasn't until four days after Iraq had seized Kuwait that Bush settled on a firm position and declared the Iraqi invasion "will not stand." From that moment, Bush was palpably in command. For Bush the son, it took about the same amount of time.

Requirement two—bringing events under control—was a critical problem for Bush senior and is for George W. The fear in 1990 was Saddam Hussein would attack Saudi Arabia and its oilfields before enough American troops and planes were deployed to stop him. So it was Saddam who controlled events early on, but he balked at invading Saudi Arabia. Once the build-up in the gulf commenced, Bush senior grabbed control.

Now, Bush the son is hard pressed to assert full control. Three days after the strikes on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, he proclaimed a national emergency "by reason of certain terrorist attacks." The day before, the Capitol had had to be evacuated briefly and the vice president had been shipped to Camp David to make sure a terrorist couldn't take out both Bush and Cheney in a single attack. Suspected terrorists remained at large in this country. The worst fear at the White House was of another terrorist assault, which would raise doubts about Bush's (or anybody's) ability to bring terrorism under control, ever. As for Carter, he was never in control in the Iranian hostage case.

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Whether Bush will satisfy requirement three of a war president—having a strategy and the will to carry it to a successful end—is unknowable. But Bush and his advisers, notably Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, have created the strong impression they actually *do* intend to extinguish terrorism aimed at America. That's a tall order. But Bush had one (and only one) strong line in his Oval Office address: that groups or states harboring terrorists would be held responsible. Others have echoed it. Wolfowitz said the Bush policy is to "end" states that aid terrorism. Buttressing the talk were real actions: a call-up of military reserves, coalition building on a world scale, and $40 billion in new military spending, just for starters.

The question is whether Bush will stay the course when, say, bombs aimed at terrorists kill women and children, or Saddam Hussein must be confronted forcibly, or complaints mount about "profiling" of Arab Americans, or allies drop by the wayside. My guess is Bush will stand firm. As a war president, he has something he didn't have before. It's a purpose for his presidency. Cutting taxes and trying to reform education are worthy goals. Wiping out terrorism is a noble cause, a crusade, if successful, that transforms a run-of-the-mill presidency into one of historic importance.

What's not required of Bush is that he become a rhetorical president. Yes, it would be nice if Bush's speeches stirred the nation. But he's no Winston Churchill and never will be. His choice of microphone as he spoke Friday afternoon beside the debris of the World Trade Center was a bullhorn. It worked. When someone yelled, "I can't hear you," Bush instantly shouted back, "I can hear you and the rest of the world can hear you, and all the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon." The crowd burst into a chant of "USA, USA, USA." And at that moment Bush's transformation into a war president, capable of inspiring without being eloquent, was complete. ♦

What Our Enemies Want . . .

And what our goals should be.

BY GARY SCHMITT & TOM DONNELLY

PRESIDENT BUSH was right Wednesday morning when he looked up from his cabinet meeting to announce: "The deliberate and deadly attacks which were carried out yesterday against our country were more than acts of terror. They were acts of war." But war to what end? What do the initiators of this war seek to achieve? What must we accomplish in response?

The short answer is this: Our adversaries want to push the United States out of the Middle East. Our response must be to prevent that.

This will require more than a vague, unfocused "war on terrorism." Yes, there is an informal global network of terrorists. But no one believes that this week's attacks came from Colombian "narcoterrorists," Southeast Asian drug lords, or the Russian mafia. The attacks came from the Middle East. They are the continuation of a long-running struggle to force the United States out of the region, and especially out of the Persian Gulf.

This struggle took on renewed life with the end of the Cold War, first with Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait and continuing through the 1995 Riyadh and 1996 Khobar Towers bombings in Saudi Arabia, the 1998 attacks on the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the "millennium" plot to bomb the Los Angeles airport in 1999, and the attempt last year to send the USS *Cole* to the bottom of the harbor in Yemen. Last week's strikes represent a new and more complex phase of this war. But this is not a new war. This is a "theater war" in the classic sense. Neither Usama bin Laden nor Saddam cares much about America's role in Europe or East Asia. They want us out of their region.

Nor is this a generalized war on American values or political principles. Yes, Saddam and Usama bin Laden despise the ideas of individual freedom and democratic government. They see our way of life as a mortal threat. But what they hate most is that America and its allies prevent them from seizing control of Saudi Arabia and the surrounding region, whether to rule in triumph or fundamentalist glory.

So the war is a struggle for power in the Persian Gulf. How can we win it?

We win by reasserting our role as the region's dominant power; as the guarantor of regional security; and as the protector of Israel, moderate Arab regimes, and the economic interests of the industrialized world. These are enduring tasks for the United States.

Our position in the Gulf has been under accelerating attack since the end of Operation Desert Storm and the decision not to remove Saddam from power in Baghdad. As Saddam has crawled back from defeat—evicting U.N. monitors, rebuilding his forces—bin Laden has grown increasingly bold. Meanwhile, our regional allies have begun to hedge their bets, not only with the terrorists and Iraq, but with Iran as well.

Any serious effort to reassert U.S. preeminence in the region must therefore be built upon a sustained campaign that addresses not just the problems of bin Laden and other terrorist organizations but the underly-

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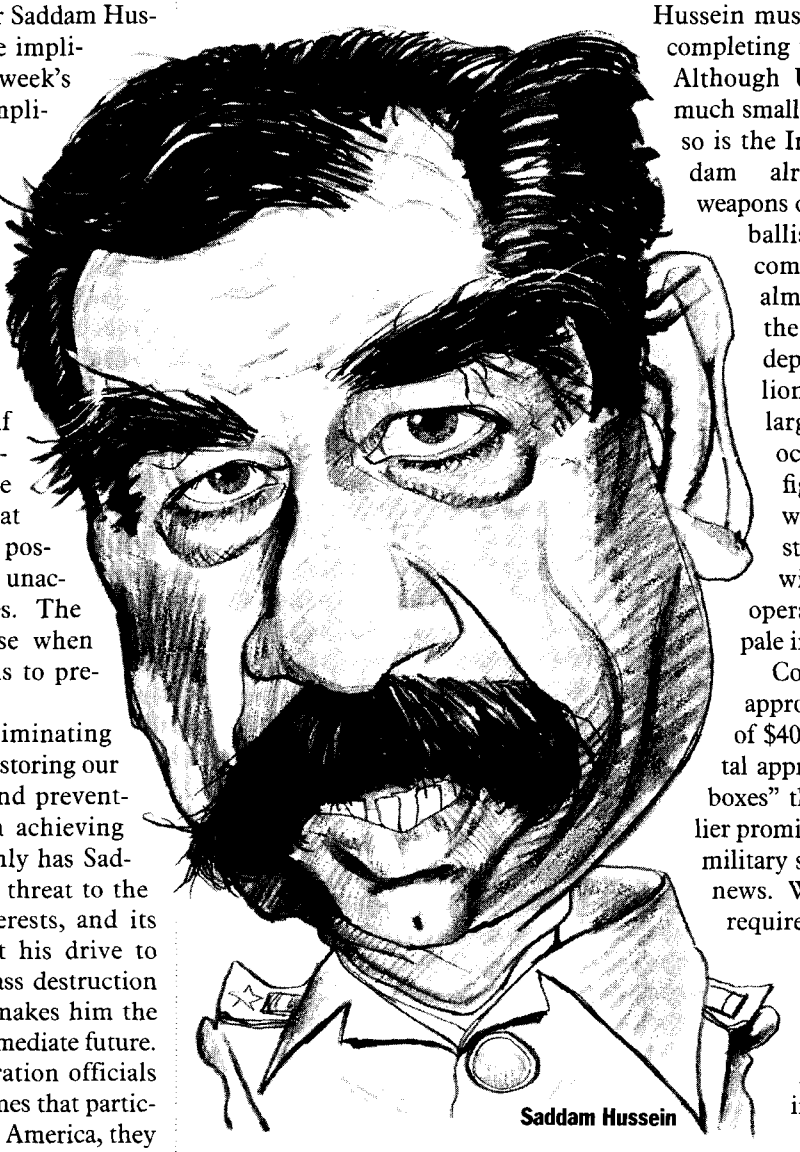
ing strategic goal that animates them and their allied states.

To be sure, Usama bin Laden and his organization should be a prime target of this campaign. His past actions alone make him a key figure in the anti-American axis in the region, and even before September 11, he had the blood of dozens of Americans on his hands. But the larger campaign also must go after Saddam Hussein. He might well be implicated directly in this week's attacks—as he was implicated in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing—or he might not. But as with bin Laden, we have long known that Saddam is our enemy, and that he would strike us as hard as he could. And if we have learned anything at all from the past week, it is that adopting a defensive posture risks attacks with unacceptable consequences. The only reasonable course when faced with such foes is to preempt and to strike first.

More important, eliminating Saddam is the key to restoring our regional dominance and preventing our enemies from achieving their war aims. Not only has Saddam been the greatest threat to the United States, its interests, and its allies in the past, but his drive to acquire weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles makes him the great danger for the immediate future. When Bush administration officials speak of "ending" regimes that participate in the war against America, they must mean Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

Defeating the Saddam/bin Laden axis will send a broader message as well. It will deter Iran, Syria, and the other part-time members of the anti-American coalition in the Middle East, and reassure our regional friends. And it will restore the global credibility tarnished in the Clinton years. Both our friends and our enemies will be watching to see if we pass this test.

Our tactics should be appropriate to these campaign goals. In going after Usama bin Laden, we will surely have to do more than fire cruise missiles at mud huts; indeed, the idea of attempting a "precision strike" at what is very clearly a worldwide organization—he is said to operate in more than 50 countries—is nonsensical. But it will be important to eliminate his base in Afghanistan, with or without the assistance of the ruling Taliban. And just as George Bush in 1989 went not only after Manuel Noriega but the entire structure of the Panama Defense Force, so must the Bush administration now root out the bin Laden organization. This will mean an extended operation, including ground forces, and some sustained actions beyond. While it is probably not necessary to go to war with Afghanistan, a broad approach will be required. For example, any failure by the Taliban to help should be rewarded by aid to its Afghan opposition.



Saddam Hussein

Illustration by Thomas Fluharty

The campaign against Saddam Hussein must likewise be decisive, completing the job begun in 1991. Although U.S. armed forces are much smaller than they were then, so is the Iraqi army. Unless Saddam already has acquired weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, the outcome of such a battle is almost certain. Nor need the attack await the deployment of half a million troops. Indeed, the larger challenge will be occupying Iraq after the fighting is over; even with allied help, a constabulary mission in Iraq will make the costs of operations in the Balkans pale in comparison.

Congress has already approved a "downpayment" of $40 billion in supplemental appropriations. The "lockboxes" that vitiated Bush's earlier promises to restore American military strength are yesterday's news. Winning the war will require a significant and sustained increase in defense budgets, but given the surpluses that exist, there is no impediment to such increases.

The president thus has a rare opportunity to deny our enemies their strategic goals in the Middle East and to restore American preeminence in a critical region of the world. With a clear, concrete, and coherent strategy, America can avenge the attack on our cities, restore national honor, and finally win the larger war in the Middle East. ♦

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All the Power He Needs

With the U.S. under attack, Bush is free to respond. BY TERRY EASTLAND

HAS ANYONE NOTICED that we are *not* having a discussion about war powers? No one is talking much about the War Powers Resolution, nor is anyone proposing that President Bush may not initiate military action unless Congress formally declares war. The almost complete silence on these matters constitutes recognition that it was for such a time as this—when the nation is under attack—that the Framers created the presidency. And it is at this time that George W. Bush must become what he doubtless never expected to be—a war president.

Passed in 1973 over President Nixon's veto, the War Powers Resolution marked an attempt on the part of a Democratic Congress to control presidential warmaking in the wake of the Vietnam war. Under the resolution, the president may not introduce the military into hostile situations without (1) a declaration of war, (2) specific statutory authorization, or (3) an attack upon the United States or its armed forces.

Since Tuesday, of course, we have been in category (3), with the "acts of war," as Bush called the attacks that day, occuring on our property and being directed against our people and our military. (Note that American Airlines flight 77 was steered into the Pentagon, not the Education Department.) The fact that we are in category (3) explains why there is so little talk about the War Powers Resolution.

The framers of the resolution included the "attack" exception to its application because otherwise it would have been unconstitutional on its face. Under the Constitution, the executive power includes the authority to defend the nation. This was the understanding well expressed by a Framer writing under the pseudonym "Marcus." Marcus was James Iredell, a future Supreme Court justice, and he stated the common understanding in the form of a question: "What sort of a government must that be, which, upon the most certain intelligence that hostilities were meditated against it, could take no method for its defense till after a formal declaration of war, or the enemy's standard was actually upon the shore?"

Years from now, the only question that will matter about Bush is how well he performed as the war president that the events of September 11, 2001, so plainly demanded.

That the "government," which is to say the president, has the inherent authority to make war in the most compelling circumstance imaginable—when the nation is about to be attacked or, as now, is under attack—has been accepted ever since. Not even the framers of the War Powers Resolution dared reject it.

The power to declare war is, of course, a legislative power, explicitly provided for in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution. Congress has declared war five times: in 1812 (the War of 1812); 1846 (the Mexican-American War); 1898 (the Spanish-American War); 1917 (World War I); and 1941 (World War II). Since Tuesday there have been numerous calls for Congress to declare war. But whatever the merits of doing that might be, no one has said that the president may not make war against those responsible for the "acts of war" unless Congress declares war. And the reason no one has said that is the same reason the War Powers Resolution is not a major topic: The executive power encompasses the authority to command the military in the nation's defense. No statute—neither one declaring war nor one merely "authorizing" the use of force—is needed to provide power the president already has.

As it happened, on Friday by a vote of 98 to 0 the Senate did pass a resolution authorizing the use of force against terrorists and the nations that harbor them. The House was expected to follow suit over the weekend. The president had asked for the resolution, but in doing so he made clear that under the Constitution he already had sufficient authority to go to war. The point of seeking the resolution was not legal but political—to show the world that the American government is united in its resolve.

The burden of conducting the war is Bush's, and the interest all Americans have in seeing him do well stems not from a desire to secure oil supplies, engage in nation-building, or enforce international peace—to mention some recent war goals—but to counter an evil that threatens us all. Indeed, that mythical state of nature in which individual rights are insecure is no longer so mythical: Any of us could have been among the thousands who were murdered, and any of us might still be among those targeted the next time. Years from now, the only question that will matter about Bush is how well he performed as the war president that the events of September 11, 2001, so plainly demanded. ♦

Terry Eastland is publisher of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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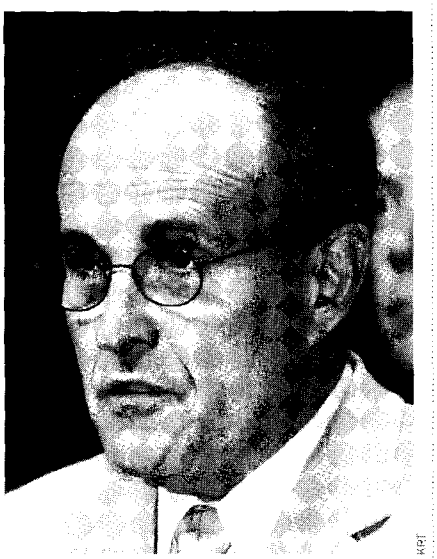
The Greatness That Was Giuliani

New Yorkers are ready to make him mayor for life. BY JOHN PODHORETZ

WHAT RUDY GIULIANI DID last week in the aftermath of the attack on New York was not all that different from what he has done in the midst of any crisis during his mayoralty. In each case—a terrible fire, a water-main break, the crash of TWA Flight 800, a neighborhood blackout—he dons the garb of an emergency worker, tours the scene, gathers the heads of his agencies, designs a plan of action, and then makes public appearances during which he informs the city about what is going on in exhaustive detail. And he does all this within a couple of hours of the incident at hand.

New Yorkers have grown so used to Giuliani's omnipresence during a crisis that we were probably far less impressed by his performance last week than the rest of the world was. We take it for granted—so much so that in the past few years, Giuliani's crisis-management style has often been the subject of grumbling and partisan attack. When his administration closed off public access to City Hall, citing terrorism concerns, conventional wisdom in New York held this to be a reflection of the mayor's paranoid grandiosity. When Giuliani announced plans in 1998 for a multi-million-dollar center to coordinate city and federal agencies in the event of a major terrorist disruption, he was accused of wanting to set up a "bunker." The choice of the word "bunker," with its Hitlerish associations, was all too intentional.

Now the bunker itself, located in one of the ancillary World Trade Center buildings, has been destroyed as a result of a terrorist plot that the most paranoid among us could never have dreamed up. There is no chance that the fences Giuliani built around City Hall will ever be removed—despite the fact that all of the mayoral candidates seeking to succeed him had promised to tear them down. And



even the mayor's enemies stand mute before the evidence of his astounding conduct on Tuesday, September 11.

Trapped in a building near the World Trade Center, Giuliani had to keep his head about him in order to find his way to safety, helping others along the way. He had to collect himself to do his job, only to learn that three of the four most senior members of the city's fire department had been killed—heartbreaking news that would soon be followed by word that they had been joined in certain death by another 300 firefighters and scores of police officers as well.

And yet there he was, only hours later, standing before cameras and offering a kind of strong reassurance the country had yet to receive from any public official. "We will strive now to save as many people as possible and to send a message that the city of New York and the United States of America is much stronger than any group of barbaric terrorists," he said. "I want the people of New York to be an example to the rest of the country and the rest of the world that terrorism can't stop us."

The plan Giuliani and his team devised on the fly was brilliant. They determined that the best way to keep the city running was immediately to evacuate and cordon off the bottom three miles of Manhattan. Unless you lived below Houston Street, your living arrangements weren't affected. And the only substantial inconvenience from interrupted subway and transportation service has been for those (like me) who live in southwestern Brooklyn.

God knows it could have been otherwise. During major disruptions at other times in the city's recent history, looting had been commonplace. This time there was none. It is possible to ascribe the social peace to the wonderful élan shown by New Yorkers after this catastrophe, but it is far more likely that the NYPD's powerhouse reputation contributed to quelling any trouble before trouble could start. For instance: Arab neighborhoods in Brooklyn were flooded with police officers to prevent the outbreak of any rioting or casual violence. And, mindful of the calamity of a subway terror attack, there were several cops in every station and at every exit everywhere in the city.

The mere fact that millions of New Yorkers felt safe enough to ride the subways after the events of last week is testimony to the almost unimaginable change in the city's consciousness over the seven years and nine months of the Giuliani mayoralty. His crisis management is of a piece with his overall method of governance. He was elected in 1993 to bring order to a city on the verge of civil collapse, and he hasn't just done it through his bril-

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liant stewardship of the police department. He's done it by making clear that what had seemed like an ungovernable city was in fact governable in all ways—if only by the sheer force of will he could bring to the job.

New Yorkers of all political stripes have rallied to Giuliani. Ed Koch, who supported Rudy and then came to hate him so much he wrote a book about his successor called *Giuliani: Nasty Man*, said: "There's no question many people who disliked him personally but admired his work have been converted." A city councilwoman named Christine Quinn, who won her office by proving to her constituents in Chelsea that she was the most gay candidate in the race, told the *Daily News*: "I feel a level of empathy and connection with the mayor I never felt before. . . . He seemed so much the human being—struggling with his own losses, but most importantly staying strong for this city. I do think this will forever . . . change the way I see this mayor."

As it happens, the primary to choose the Democratic and Republican candidates for the upcoming mayoral election had been underway for almost three hours on September 11 when the first plane crashed into the World Trade Center. The primary was postponed, and for the first time it became perfectly clear to New Yorkers that come January, Rudolph Giuliani really will no longer be the mayor.

Still, Giuliani's mayoralty has been so successful, and his stewardship of the city during the past week so heartening, that it offers hope for the future. For if indeed one man proved he could govern a city that seemed ungovernable before him, then any man can govern the city—provided he believes in the right things and does the right things at the right times.

But it's the rarest of men whose mere image on television offers the powerful consolation of calm leadership in a nightmarish time. In the first few days of this crisis, it was the mayor of the city of New York who offered that consolation. ♦

Remembering the Towers

What the World Trade Center meant to New Yorkers. BY IRWIN M. STELZER

At 8:45 last Tuesday morning, I was sitting in a plane at Kennedy airport waiting to take off when my cell phone rang. A very worried spouse said that a plane had crashed into one of the towers of the World Trade Center, and she was checking to be certain that it wasn't mine. Cita also said that given the clear weather, she couldn't believe the hit was an accident. Right, as usual.

But somehow neither I nor my fellow passengers absorbed the implications of the smoke we could now see billowing from the tower. Our plane taxied onto the tarmac. Then it stopped, and my wife called again to tell me why. It is amazing how quickly an event of global import gets translated into the personal. One passenger was the CEO of a company with thousands of employees, among them a son-in-law, in the upper floors of the World Trade Center. Others had children working for various Wall Street firms. I had no such immediate personal connection. Yet I was moved in a personal way. Let me explain.

I was brought up on the lower east side of New York. My father came to this country as a 9- or 10-year-old, with an identifying tag tied to his clothes, and no English. This great and open country gave him the chance to prosper—within the meaning of that word at the time—and educate me so that I, too, could prosper, and to an extent that would astonish him. "Only in America" was an oft-used phrase in our house, sometimes to express exasperation with some aspect of cultural life in this still-slightly-foreign land, more often to marvel at the opportunities it offers.

And by "prosper" I don't mean only money. Sure, there was discrimination against Jews, but discrimination provides an incentive to overcome it, in part so as to turn the tables on the discriminators when fate and business dealings put us on opposite sides. Which is why the "Jewish" law and consulting firms that sprang up in New York in the 1950s—when the "white shoe" firms wouldn't even interview top Jewish graduates of premier schools such as Harvard—came to be known as "pushy."

One thing we all knew: New York City was the only place where we could carve out the rich, exciting lives we were enjoying. There were enough businessmen in the market for talent—and never mind whether those pitching for their business had uncles with great family names, or knew a driver from a putter, or wore the right school tie. And the vitality of the city—its night life, bookies—well, I'll leave all of that to Damon Runyon and Frank Sinatra. But I must mention its special integrity. Billions of dollars change hands on the stock exchange every day, with no written contracts; from your broker to your bookmaker, in this city you can count on a man's word to be his bond.

Which brings me to the World Trade Center. Everyone joked that it was then-governor Nelson Rockefeller's last erection or, to the more prudish, a white elephant. And so it seemed. This was a day when a Wall Street address was essential unless you were in one of the lower levels of the financial services industry, like selling insurance. No one would go as far

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west as the twin towers except to play squash in the nearby athletic club (no Jews allowed).

No one, that is, except relatively new firms who couldn't find any space on Wall Street and sensed that the twin towers just might be a prestige address some day soon. Besides, it was cheap. So I took a gamble and signed a lease, feeling just as much a pioneer, moving west of Broadway towards the Hudson River, as earlier American entrepreneurs must have felt moving west of the Mississippi. Like them, we prospered. And this even though we moved into one of the center's lower-rise buildings, after our staff protested our original choice of a few floors at the top of one of the towers.

So, to me, New York and the World Trade Center are all mixed up in my head and heart with the realization of the American dream. I can't forget what it felt like to take possession of shiny new offices in what was to become one of the great office complexes of the greatest city in the world. It was more than a commercial triumph. It was an accomplishment that let us share in the swagger and sense of invulnerability that all New Yorkers have, especially when confronting outsiders—those not privileged to face the daily trials of getting to and from work in overcrowded subways; to eat in joints where the waiter or waitress greets you with "What'll you have?" instead of "Hello, I am your server"; those who wouldn't know where to get a haircut at midnight after picking up an early edition of a New York tabloid. Poor souls, those Runyonesque Scarsdale Galahads, with their Brooks Brothers suits. And their lawns to mow. They thought New York was a good place to visit, but they wouldn't want to live there—just as well, from the point of view of us New Yorkers.

When Frank Sinatra called New York "the city that never sleeps" he had in mind something quite different from the round-the-clock rescue efforts that at this writing continue. But those efforts wouldn't surprise him. New Yorkers can work as well as play at night. And one thing we know how to do: survive. And prevail. ♦

How Not to Fix Airport Security

Banning curbside check-in isn't going to cut it. BY SAM DEALEY

IN THE DAYS following the terrorist attack on New York and Washington last week, an employee of a major U.S. airline read to Florida congressman John Mica the procedures his carrier instructs its pilots to adopt in the event of a hijacking. The chairman of the House aviation subcommittee calls them "outdated," but he's being diplomatic. As Mica recalls, the guidelines include a mixture of reverse-Helsinki Syndrome psychology—"Try to befriend the hijacker"—and Cold War phantasm—"When you land in Havana, try to notify the Swiss Embassy."

Precisely what actions onboard employees should take in the event of a hijacking are secret. Other than to say they are designed to be non-confrontational, aviation officials refuse to divulge specific techniques. "We don't want to give advantages to anybody," says John Mazor, spokesman for the Air Line Pilots Association. "There's always going to be kooks and copycats."

But if their actions in the immediate aftermath are any indication of what's to come, the copycats Americans should be most worried about are the ones crafting new airport security measures. The first response to the crisis by federal aviation players was a double dose of the medicine that didn't work.

Last Wednesday, Transportation secretary Norman Mineta issued a handful of emergency procedures in response to the terrorist hijackings. These included the suspension of curbside check-in, allowing only ticketed passengers in airport gate areas, and prohibiting all knife-like instruments with blades under four inches long. Aviation folks say these are temporary procedures, but they give a sense of the direction airline officials will be taking in the weeks and months ahead as new policies are crafted. And that's not reassuring.

So far the likely effect seems to be longer waiting lines, increased flight delays, and the banning of knives at airport restaurants—it's forks and spoons only, now. What's more, the procedures still don't work. Last Thursday three Northwest Airlines employees deliberately walked through security at the Phoenix airport with a pocketknife and a corkscrew. That a corkscrew has now been deemed a weapon gives one a sense of the impossibility of this approach. After all, if a corkscrew is a weapon, then conceivably one could hijack a plane with a fork.

Nonetheless, the big players seem to think these are all reasonable ideas. After day-long meetings with FAA officials last Wednesday regarding Mineta's measures, the pilots' union "came to the conclusion that, as short-term solutions go, these were sufficient." Meanwhile, an FAA spokesman reacts with hostility to the idea that the new guidelines may be half-baked. "They 'may have been a bit hasty'?" he mocks. "No, no! Why would you say that?" But a spokeswoman for the Association of Flight Attendants admits, "From the information we have, it doesn't seem that these new security procedures would have been able to stop these terrorist acts from happening. I'm not sure they're matched up that well."

The problem, in a nutshell, is that the sort of solution that would have a chance of foiling an attack like last

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Tuesday's would involve not just changing a procedure here and there, but altering a mindset—the sense of complacency that says safety and security can be left to trained government officials—and confronting two political taboos, profiling and guns.

A sensible approach, for example, might include permitting pilots to carry sidearms. "I very much favor it," says Mica. "At least give our people a fighting chance." But whether the initiative will have a fighting chance in Washington is doubtful: The unions are staunchly against it. "That's a non-starter," says the Pilots' Association. "We don't need to make these situations more dangerous than they are," say the flight attendants. And what's wrong with profiling passengers? Certain groups of people have higher rates of hijacking, and not to regard them more closely is naive and dangerous. "No question about it," says Porter Goss, chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. "You're going to see a great debate on this regarding our freedoms and our safeguards."

Which is not to say the steps so far are wholly inadequate. Armed "sky marshals" have already been placed on some flights, and a number of legislators are agitating to make this practice widespread, if not permanent. Given that two of the hijackers bought tickets under names that were on FBI "watch lists," a combining of law enforcement and some intelligence databases seems probable. Next-generation planes will likely have thicker and more armored bulkheads, to protect the flight cabin more thoroughly. But, as with the FAA's new guidelines, there are disturbing signs that lawmakers and bureaucrats will simply repackage existing procedures and market them as New and Improved.

Traditional interest-group politics is alive and well. "We feel the weakest link is security workers at the airports," says the flight attendants' union spokeswoman. "They barely make a living wage, and turnover is very high." Yes, unionizing airport security workers. We should feel safer already. ♦

The Brits Are All Right

Except for their wobbly elites.

BY PETER D. FEAVER

Cambridge, England

THE TERRORISTS wanted a war with America and they will get one, though they erred if they thought it would be the kind of pinprick, slap-on-the-wrist war the United States has waged of late. Rather it will be the sustained, root-and-branch kind of war the United States tends to win.

It may even be a world war, with the United States once more leading a global alliance of democracies and civilized societies. The early responses from governments around the world are encouraging. Rapid pledges of support, buttressed by an outpouring of public sentiment, mean that America will not have to fight alone. But there is reason to worry about the mettle of our allies, and a closer look at our staunchest, the United Kingdom, illustrates the point.

On the positive side, no leader was quicker than Prime Minister Tony Blair to understand the global significance of September 11. Even before anyone knew whether the attack was over, Blair publicly jumped into the American foxhole with some of the most stirring rhetoric this war has yet seen: "This is not a battle between the United States of America and terrorism but between the free and democratic world and terrorism. We, therefore, here in Britain, stand shoulder to shoulder with our American friends in this hour of tragedy and we like them will not rest until this evil is driven from our world."

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Blair's early pledge has been backed up by similar statements by other allies (including the French) and by concrete measures, not the least of which is NATO's pledge of Article 5 support: The attack on the United States is legally viewed by our European allies as an attack on all of NATO. And, of course, Blair and others are reflecting the sentiment of their general populations, which have been stirred to show unprecedented demonstrations of support for Americans. Even the queen has jumped on the bandwagon: Two days after the attack and for the first time ever, her band played the "Star Spangled Banner" at the ceremonial Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace.

But the initial response in the British media also points to a potential Achilles' heel in the emerging global alliance against terrorism: the knee-jerk anti-Americanism of much of Britain (and Europe's) intellectual and media elite.

The terrible news reached London in mid-afternoon. Understandably, an initial detached horror soon gave way to concern that targets in London might also be attacked. As this concern abated, the pundit class took up the task of interpreting the day's events and explaining the "deeper meanings," which they have been doing at great volume ever since, and in too many cases, exposing a visceral and largely uninformed dislike of the United States and especially the current American president. To be sure, anti-Americanism appeared only in some of the commentary, and even then it was qualitatively different from the unalloyed hatred that motivated the terrorists themselves. But it

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ZUMA Press

The 7th Company Coldstream Guard's ceremony at Buckingham Palace honoring the American dead.

is troubling all the same, and shows up in three errors common to much of the British "expert" commentary on the events.

The first error is to declare that this attack proves the bankruptcy of Bush's foreign policy, especially in the Middle East. This shows up most often in commentary asking, "Do Americans understand why they are hated?" One particularly odious piece published days after the attack clucked that Americans still "simply don't get it." The shocking underlying assumption seems to be that the hatred of the terrorists tells us more about the object of their hatred than about the moral condition of the terrorists and those who sympathize with them. As if the fundamental question had been what the Jews did to provoke Hitler.

Another commentator drew sharp contrasts between the "vigorous engagement" of the Clinton administration and the "stunning" reversal and "isolationism" of the Bush administration and as much as said that it was the latter that caused the terrorist attack. Of course, if this terrorist attack is proven linked to the breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, then, if anything, the deep cause of the attack is precisely the "vigorous engagement" the commentator celebrated. As is now clear to most observers—including Clinton administration officials in candid, off-the-record moments—the peace process broke down because the Clinton administration tried to impose a negotiated settlement on an Arafat unwilling to accept peace. The commentators conveniently forget that the peace process shattered irretrievably long before Bush became president. None of the Bush critics has produced a single workable concrete proposal showing how more vigorous outside involvement (more vigorous than Clinton's?) will help.

The second error is to declare that this attack shows the bankruptcy of Bush's defense policy, especially its focus on national missile defense. Countless commentators and reporters observed (correctly) that no ballistic missile defense could have stopped the attack and then went on to conclude (erroneously) that this proves the futility of Bush's national security strategy. On the contrary, the attack confirms the basic thrust of the Bush approach, which holds that threats to American soil—even improbable threats—must be countered and protected against if possible.

European elites profess that they cannot understand why an American president would take homeland defense so seriously that he would invest billions of dollars in constructing a defense shield against very unlikely attacks. The rationale for such defensive measures should now be plain. As horrible as these terrorist attacks were, they would be immeasurably worse if they involved weapons of mass destruction delivered by ballistic missiles. For this reason, it would be irresponsible in the extreme if an American president abandoned efforts to protect against improbable but catastrophic threats. European elites seem to want Americans simply to "accept" a vulnerability. The ghost towers of the World Trade Center show that such vulnerability is unacceptable. To be sure, there are legitimate questions to be raised about feasibility and trade-offs, but the curious European idea that the United States need not take homeland defense seriously has been forever discredited—except, apparently, in the minds of the European elite.

The third error, growing in promi-

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nence as the global alliance gains momentum, is to assume that the United States will be irresponsible save for any restraint imposed by the (presumably more) sophisticated European allies. We cannot trust the Texas cowboy to drive the convoy, these commentators argue; we must start tapping the brakes now. The sentiment drips from contemptuous rhetoric about America as a "vengeful, angry Goliath" who, unless restrained by wiser European heads, will become a "pitiful, helpless, giant." It screams from headlines, "Mister Blair Must Be Prepared to Stand Up to President Bush." It oozes from an editorial cartoon that even Saddam Hussein would reject as too crass: President Bush with donkey ears in a Darth Vader costume declaring war on "abroad." Prominent air time is given to painful interviews with American pundits who, obviously out of their depth, raise the old specter of the Florida voting mess and Bush's supposed lack of mandate.

Of course, there are legitimate and thorny questions about how best to wage the war. Mindless and indiscriminate vengeance will only serve the aims of the terrorists. But there is every indication President Bush understands what this war will take much better than do the "sophisticated pragmatists" who are glancing nervously in his direction. All these errors and more spring from the same source, the tired anti-Americanism that has strained U.S. relations with its allies for so long. The craven attack converted many previous adherents—one prominent French expert famously observed, "We are all New Yorkers now"—but too many still cling to the old prejudices.

In waging a war against terrorism, the Bush administration will be tested by friends as well as by foes. One suspects that Europe's political leaders understand this as well. The intended audience of Blair's ringing comments, or of NATO secretary general George Robertson's repeated invocation of "solidarity," is not just the terrorists or the besieged Americans—it is the wobbly European chattering class. ♦

South Toward Hell

The sad streets of New York. BY MATT LABASH

New York

IT DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT, really—romanticizing catastrophe instead of just confronting its grim particulars head-on. Still, they cut quite a swath at Sir Harry's Bar in the Waldorf-Astoria, these brave men with forearm tattoos and walrus mustaches—firefighting volunteers who have swooped in from places like Danbury and Pittsburgh to shore up New York's own decimated ranks. The hotel has graciously provided free accommodations. So after a 12-hour shift sifting through World Trade Center rubble, firemen stagger into the bar like flame-retardant cowboys, still wearing their charbroiled gear. As they fill the room, I turn to a well-heeled patron, trying to summon an appropriate reference from a Peckinpah movie. "They look like somebody," I say, struggling. "Like goddamned heroes," he replies, as the fireman douse their dust-infested insides with complimentary rounds.

But the further south one travels from Midtown, the fewer morale-quickening encounters one has. On the ride down to 14th Street, I notice splintered glass embedded in the dashboard of my cab. "It flew through my open window," says cabbie John Parafestas, who was driving near the south tower when the second hijacker steered the plane through it. "I busted a U-turn on the West Side Highway. I thought, 'I gotta get home now, or I'll never get home again.'"

Below the 14th Street perimeter, non-rescue vehicles and civilians are forbidden. Lower Manhattan has been emptied by terrorists. Even the drug-dealers and nut-cake orators are on leave from Washington Square Park. And while it is just eerily silent from the Village to Little Italy, everything below Canal Street looks like Pompeii.

Even after two days of clean-up, many streets retain footprints in a light snow of concrete ash. Emergency vehicles, many of them caught in the towers' collapse, are stacked like soot-covered matchbox cars. Newcomers to the scene needn't ask directions to the heart of the wreckage—since the spot is marked by a smoky, sulfuric cloud that changes shape with the wind, but never quite moves on. Signs marking closed businesses—"Lingerie, Lounge Wear, Essentials"—seem profoundly decadent, as all that matters now (besides, as my cabbie suggests, "bringing the pain" to whoever did this) is the 20-story-high heap of broken stones and people.

On my walk down to the site, I catch up with an iron worker from Queens. He doesn't want his name used, nor does he seem thrilled that I'm interrupting his breakfast—a Budweiser tall-boy which he sips out of a slim paper bag. "I need this drink," he says. After he tells of his prior day's work, it's understood why.

"Yesterday was cruel to the system," he explains, as if the human-interest stories on the cable shows haven't quite conveyed the intensity. He spent his volunteer shift not only cutting through fallen I-beams, but also recovering human remains. Not bodies, exactly. "Everything was in parts," he says. "I filled 25 bags full of parts." The part he's seeing now—and saw last night during haunted sleep—belonged to a woman. He knows this because her toes were painted, though everything above her thigh was gone. We stop at a security checkpoint beyond which I'm not allowed. He now seems reluctant to part. "I don't want to go back in there," he says. His eyes fill up behind aviator sunglasses, but he snaps to,

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taking a final anesthetic swig. Still buried under concrete slabs and twisted steel are two firefighter friends and a paramedic cousin. "I just want to use my skills, cut metal, whatever," he says. "That's why I'm going back."

There are also plenty of horrors above 14th Street, and nowhere more than at the National Guard Armory on 26th and Lexington. Outside the grimy, gothic building where a surly gargoyle keeps sentry, people wind around the block in two lines. The first line contains those who are, for the first time, filling out "Personal Information Questionnaires"—not about themselves, but about loved ones who have not turned up since the Twin Towers collapsed. The second line contains people who have already filled out the painstaking identification survey (the facial hair category, for instance, contains 10 subcategories from "Fu Manchu" to "Handle Bar"), but who have more information to give.

In this second category are Elliot and Andy Waller, two Maryland brothers on the lookout for their cousin, Josh Rosenthal, last seen on the 90th floor of Tower Two. The Wallers have come to supply investigators with more information, such as hair samples they pulled from their cousin's brush. After telling me how they almost failed to secure Josh's dental X-rays (his dentist's office is near Barneys, which today received a bomb threat), they hand me a "Missing" poster describing all their cousin's vitals. While the Wallers store their posters in a manila envelope, others are less subtle, preferring to advertise missing loved ones on their torsos—as if they were wandering city streets, waiting to be recognized.

The inside of the armory represents something Dante would have conceived of if he'd possessed a truly dark imagination. Hundreds of people sit on metal folding chairs on a scuffed wood floor, while hundreds more clog the aisles. It's difficult to tell if people are crying or perspiring, as the only cooling agents are two small fans propped against televisions beaming the latest in disaster developments. Row upon row of people shrug off detectives and chaplains and oversolicitous Red Cross volunteers, who every 30 seconds or so offer anxious family members bottled water or chocolate chip cookies or Arizona Iced tea.

Firemen at the World Trade Center.

"They ought to give you tranquilizers instead," jokes Edlene LaFrance, a nurse from the Bronx who is waiting, along with her adult son Jody Howard and his wife, to find out what became of Alan LaFrance, her husband and Jody's father.

It's about the only joking the family does. They, like other relatives, sit in stony silence, facing the door that leads to the basement, where, 20 at a time, they are taken to see two lists indicating that their loved one has been located and is either hospitalized or deceased. After two hours of waiting—"the most nervous I've ever been" says Edlene—the family finally gets the call. They go through an archway, descend a staircase, and snake down a long hall to see the lists. One volunteer offers a final shot of Pepsi, as if caffeine can prepare someone for the worst news they'll ever get. At a basement table, a Red Cross volunteer offers to comb the lists for Alan's name. Edlene assents, then lays her head on the table like a despondent child. Alan has not turned up in any of the hospitals. Neither is he on the deceased list.

For a moment, hope is restored. Edlene clutches a wedding picture of her husband in his white tuxedo. Their twenty-first anniversary is in two weeks, and maybe she'll be able to give him his already-purchased present—a new wedding ring. But then there's the hard math. It's been 58 hours since Alan disappeared in Tower Two. Though Alan wasn't on the "bad list," he wasn't on the "good list" either. Edlene's consolation prize, it turns out, is not much of one at all. Tomorrow, the bad list will be updated, and she'll have to look at it again. ♦

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Biden ♥ Bush

The amazing pirouette of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman. BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS after launching what his aides touted as an assault on President Bush and his foreign and defense policies, Senator Joseph Biden found himself accepting the president's thanks.

As members of Congress scattered following last Tuesday's attack—some to their homes, some to Capitol Hill bars, some to protected locations—Bush phoned the Democratic chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from Air Force One to express his gratitude.

"He thanked me for my words of support," says Biden. On his way home to Delaware with Pennsylvania Rep. Robert Brady, Biden assured Bush of his continued backing. "Whatever I can do, I'll do." To use a grim adaptation of the old cliché: What a difference a day makes.

The day before the attack, Bush's relationship with Senate Democrats generally, and Joe Biden specifically, could not have been more strained. On top of unrelenting criticism on the budget—now, practically meaningless—Democrats were preparing a fresh attack.

Shortly before he was scheduled to speak at the National Press Club last Monday, Biden's staff eagerly distributed an article from that morning's *Los Angeles Times*. According to the paper, Biden was going to lead an "assault" by his party on President Bush's foreign policy, a "policy offensive" focused on Bush's proposal for missile defense funding. Senate Democrats would "challenge the Bush administration's vision of threats to the United States in the post-Cold War world," because they saw "a political vulnerability on foreign policy." Biden's speech was beyond blunt. The president's missile defense policy was deemed "nonsense," his advisers "relics of the Cold War."

Missile defense opponents maintain that the speech was prophetic. "The real threat comes to this country in the hold of a ship, the belly of a plane, or smuggled into a city in the middle of the night in a vial in a backpack," Biden argued. To hurt the United States, he asked rhetorically, are you more likely to fire a missile, or "put somebody with a backpack crossing the border from Vancouver down to Seattle, or coming up New York Harbor with a rusty old ship with an atom bomb sitting in the hull?" But it's not likely to have a place in any future Biden press kit.

The day before the attack, Bush's relations with Senate Democrats could not have been more strained.

The Press Club speech—and a preview of it on *Meet the Press* the day before—was to have been just one element in a sort of coming out week for Biden. Often mentioned as a potential 2004 challenger to Bush—speculation he has not discouraged—Biden was all set to play an important adversarial role in two high-profile confirmation hearings.

The Senate Judiciary Committee, of which Biden is a senior member, was to hold a hearing Tuesday on Bush's drug czar nominee, John Walters. And Biden's Foreign Relations Committee was set to grill John Negroponte, a career foreign service officer who is Bush's nominee to serve as U.N. ambassador, the following day. Although late speculation was that both nominees would eventually be confirmed, the hearings were expected to be rough, with Biden throwing many of the sharpest elbows.

Though Walters's hearing was postponed, Biden pledged to expedite hearings of top foreign policy advisers the White House designated as crucial to responding to last week's attacks. Negroponte got his hearing Thursday. Biden (who left the hearing briefly to take a call from Secretary of State Colin Powell) raised questions as expected about Negroponte's tenure as ambassador to Honduras during the 1980s. But he also pointed to Negroponte's "distinguished record of service to the nation" and voted in favor of confirmation. The committee vote was 14-3—with Democrats Paul Wellstone, Barbara Boxer, and Russ Feingold in opposition. Full Senate confirmation is expected within days.

Outside the Capitol shortly after the Negroponte hearings on Thursday, Biden was full of praise for Bush. "The president, God love him, has an overwhelmingly difficult job right now," Biden said. "There is a coalescing of liberals, conservatives, moderates, everyone. And I think the administration is doing a hell of a job."

Some Republicans argue that while Biden has publicly backed Bush, he hasn't been as cooperative behind the scenes. "He hasn't been as bad as some others, like Senator Dodd, but he could be doing more," says a top Republican aide working on these issues. The aide pointed to Biden's caviling over language in the resolution authorizing Bush to use force. "We should be acting together on this, and he's nitpicking on language," complained the aide.

But others say Biden has, on the whole, been helpful. "It's not just Biden," says a GOP leadership aide. "It's everyone." Oddly enough, it looks as though Biden will see his ambitions better served as Bush's best Democratic friend in the Senate, than as his chief adversary. ♦

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Bin Laden, Beware

Here's how to break the spirit of the holy warriors

By Reuel Marc Gerecht

If you are an American, raised on a diet of Western rationalism, it is difficult to understand the idea of holy war. We can look back hundreds of years to the Wars of Religion, where Christians rapaciously killed each other over matters of faith. We can look at Northern Ireland's troubles and glimpse, just barely, divinely sanctioned warfare. We can of course look back to communism and fascism—the West's most recent attempts to bring heaven to earth—and better appreciate the ideological fire that produces a moral imperative to kill women and children.

Yet we always want to avert our eyes from such burning light and believe that there must be accessible solutions to abate the anger of two opposing sides. The liberal in us wants to believe that humanity is bound by hope. The pragmatist inside never stops searching for some deal that will allow the avaricious and sybaritic side of human nature to triumph over messy, abstract idealism. The pacifist in our hearts doesn't want to believe that people can see violence as an expression of fraternity and love.

On September 11 American rationalism got fuel-bombed by a force whose mores are hopelessly irreconcilable with our own. For Usama bin Laden, the Saudi holy warrior, and for the true-believers who converted civilian airliners into missiles, the hand of God really did take down the World Trade Center's twin towers. This is an obvious point that bears repeating, since, as we seriously start thinking about how we are going to reply to this horrendous assault, American rationalism is likely to reenter the debate.

In Western Europe and Canada, very neat, tidy places, we can already see what's brewing. The call to search for "the roots of this problem"—which inevitably implies that we have done something wrong, and until that something has been corrected we can expect others to be mean-spirited—will no doubt return, at least on the left-hand side of America. We can confidently expect that Israel will somehow be blamed for this mess, since the Israeli-Arab confrontation, so the State Department has always told us, is obviously the epicenter of the anti-American hostility throughout the Middle East. (This is, of course, news to Usama bin Laden, as it is to Ayatollah Khomeini's faithful followers, who don't seem to think that five million Jews in Israel have sufficient stature to be the "Great Satan" in their battle between Good and Evil.) We can certainly expect guilt and anxiety to return to the op-ed pages as soon as America starts to punish bloodily those responsible in the Middle East. Holy wars *are* exceptionally ugly because they offer no escape from a *guerre à outrance*—even if only one side believes that God is at their backs.

And this is definitely a fight to the bitter end, which means first and foremost that we must eliminate Usama bin Laden. As long as he lives, we have lost the war against radical Islamic terrorism. He will never stop bombing us. His magnetism within militant Islamic circles is undeniable. He will never stop recruiting others to the cause. He has made a rag-tag outfit of Islamic militants, his terrorist umbrella organization Al Qaeda, in just a few years the most celebrated holy warriors in modern Islamic history.

Bin Laden didn't do this, of course, all by himself: He has in all probability received critical assistance from other terrorist organizations and Middle Eastern states. The bombings in New York and Washington may well confirm what the attack on the USS *Cole* in Aden, Yemen, strongly suggested—that either or both the Hezbollah of Lebanon (which means the ruling clergy of the Islamic Republic of Iran) and Saddam Hussein helped accelerate the learning curve of bin Laden's kamikazes.

But it is bin Laden, not the leaders of Hezbollah, Iran, and Iraq, who has become the poster boy of anti-Western hostility throughout the Middle East. Bin Laden, far more effectively than Saddam Hussein, has been tweaking the nerves of Islamic civilization, which has experienced 300 years of defeat by Western armies but vividly remembers a millennium of triumphs over Christians and Jews. He knows how to play the passions of the oldest clash of civilizations. Like Iran's ruling clerics, the Saudi militant reminds his listeners that the West not only physically

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invades the Muslim world (U.S. military bases in the Persian Gulf, Israel) but culturally and spiritually pollutes the Muslim soul. Little, slavish, Westernized dictators and kings, according to bin Laden, now rule the Muslim *umma*, the community of believers.

And bin Laden intends to smite them both. The assaults on America's embassies, ships, and cities and the recent kamikaze attack on Ahmed Shah Massoud, the famous (particularly in the Middle East), awe-inspiring commander of the anti-Taliban Afghan opposition, show clearly that he can do both. What hasn't been fully appreciated in the West is the extent to which bin Laden and the other radical Islamists in his orbit have a domestic, Middle Eastern agenda. They want to drive the West, physically and spiritually, out of the Islamic world, which means at home intimidating, preferably annihilating, backsliding Muslims who are far too comfortable with Western ways.

Bin Laden has been trying to show that a band of faithful Muslims can, with the right weapons in the hands of death-wish believers, reverse the history of the Muslim world. If you can repeatedly maul the United States, the spiritual cutting edge of Western civilization, and get away with it (and the Clinton administration's feeble attempts to punish bin Laden with cruise missiles and court cases certainly gave no impression that America was defending its turf), you simultaneously degrade the West's ideals, which is the ultimate objective. The collapse of the World Trade Center is in this sense, for an Islamic holy warrior, the most potentially promising victory since the Ottoman Empire took Constantinople in 1453.

Only Ayatollah Khomeini rivaled bin Laden in audacity and scope of vision. And, it's worthwhile to recall, the United States had a devilish time trying to handle Khomeini. Saddam Hussein did a somewhat better job. After eight years of World War I-style warfare against Iran, Saddam finally cracked the holy-warrior, death-wish spirit that had infected an entire nation of young Iranians. We are, indeed, fortunate that we do not have to deal with a large country that exalts young men who ride across mine fields on motorcycles. Nevertheless, Khomeini and the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) are helpful reference points for us now, as we design our battle plans against bin Laden.

First, when Khomeini died in 1989, things got better. The Ayatollah's charisma wasn't transferable. When he passed away, the truly violent spiritual furnace of Iran's Islamic revolution went out. When bin Laden dies, things, too, will get better. We will still have other holy warriors to deal with; and we will still have other terrorist organizations and terrorist-supporting intelligence services to confront. But if we kill bin Laden, the champion of the movement will have been defeated in battle. Bin Laden's awe, which has primarily been built upon dead Americans, will become ours. And we shouldn't fear bin Laden's becoming a martyr. As Presidents Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and Hafez al-Assad of Syria, who both squashed fundamentalist threats to their power, would advise, martyrs in the Middle East are a dime a dozen.

Second, you can crack the holy-warrior spirit through combat. It took years, but Saddam Hussein did it with artillery, machine guns, land mines, and flaming oil pits. The British did it in 1898 on the plains outside of Omdurman, where they defeated the holy warriors of the Mahdist regime in Sudan, with cannon-fire and Gatling guns. The Ottomans in 1514 broke the invincible spirit of the holy warriors under the ultra-radical Iranian Shah Ismail at the battle of Chaldiran with musketry and sword. The key in these conflicts, and so many more in Islamic history, was demonstrating with frightful clarity the indefatigability of the triumphant power. The United States obviously cannot and should not dominate the Middle East in the manner of the Ottoman Empire, but it can show, as it did in 1991, that it can deploy awesome firepower. It must also show, as it didn't in the Gulf War, its staying power.

If we are going to defeat bin Laden, his allied holy warriors, and others who have supported them, we are going to have to understand that friendship for and partnership with the United States in the Middle East primarily hinges on American power. It does not depend on whether Washington pursues policies our Middle Eastern "allies" like. It absolutely does not depend on whether Israel makes all of the concessions that Yasser Arafat wants. Indeed, an important part of the evanescing of American power in the Middle East since 1991 has been precisely due to the impression that America and Israel were tiring of the Israeli-Arab confrontation, that they both wanted, with increasing urgency through the 1990s, an escape from the costs and unpleasantness of the cold war between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

With their liberal, lonely hearts working overtime, the Israelis threw themselves into the peace process in exactly the way the Department of State had always wanted: Concessions became the sine qua non of Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak's negotiating style. Also, the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon was a catastrophe for Israel, and by extension, us, because the Israelis demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that they were wearying of the fight. Barak's concession on East Jerusalem was, of course, the coup de grâce, giving Arafat and everybody else in the Middle East the impression that Israel, and America right behind her at the negotiating table, had gone completely

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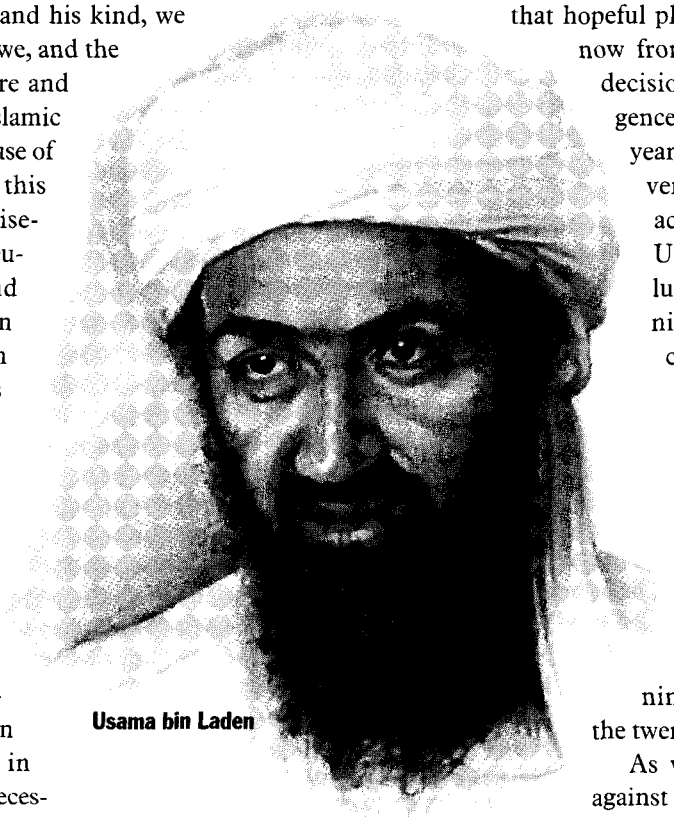
wobbly—or to put it in the way most often reported in the American press, Israel had shown unexpected flexibility, moderation, and courage. Israel's loss of nerve in Lebanon and its "flexibility" in the peace process were, of course, complemented and much compounded by America's increasingly inept handling of an ever-stronger Saddam Hussein. For bin Laden and his holy warriors, and the Middle Eastern audience to which they constantly play, it was blindingly obvious by 1998, when Al Qaeda struck the U.S. embassies in Africa, that America was on the run.

To defeat bin Laden and his kind, we *have* to restore our awe, and the only way you acquire and retain such majesty in the Islamic Middle East is through the use of military power. Of course, this doesn't mean that we cruise-missile an empty pharmaceutical factory in Sudan and rock-hut training camps in Afghanistan. It doesn't mean that we fire cruise missiles for a couple of weeks at the Taliban (though that would be a good beginning). It means that we get up-close and personal, as Winston Churchill did at Omdurman.



Usama bin Laden

It also means that we have the political and cultural stamina to sustain American troops in Afghanistan for as long as necessary to track down and kill bin Laden. Logistically, we obviously cannot allow ourselves to be held hostage to the fickleness of our allies, who support us now but may not support us so enthusiastically when CNN starts broadcasting the bloody images of America's revenge. It also means that America must be prepared to inflict immense damage on any other terrorist organization or terrorist-supporting state, even if that means we have to scorch southern Lebanon or Revolutionary Guard dormitories and depot facilities in Tehran. We may have to commit the necessary resources and manpower to topple Saddam Hussein.

As we calculate the costs, we will be inclined to deceive ourselves with easy, silver-bullet solutions. The idea of covert action will no doubt rise again. We should immediately bury the thought in the Iraqi ashes of the Agency's last covert-action fiasco. The Central Intelligence Agency, which has probably never seen bin Laden coming unless a foreign security service, or the eavesdroppers at the National Security Agency, gave them a tip, is incapable of conducting such operations. The CIA's problems with counterterrorism are enormous, and they are systemic; they certainly do not spring, as former President Bush recently suggested, from human-rights restrictions on clandestine operations (would that CIA case officers even saw terrorists, let alone worried about the morality of recruiting them).

"Better intelligence"—how often have we heard that hopeful phrase?—isn't going to save us now from making the hard military decisions. Even a first-rate intelligence service, which of course takes years to build, would still have a very difficult time tracking the activities of Usama bin Laden. Unless we get extraordinarily lucky, which means the Pakistanis actually become effective clandestine allies or the Taliban lose their nerve, we aren't going to be able to assassinate bin Laden through proxies or a Delta Force commando squad. The battle against terrorism won't be "the new warfare of the twenty-first century"; it's going to be nineteenth-century warfare in the twenty-first century.

As we can already tell, the war against Usama bin Laden will be for the Middle East and us a defining experience. The fate of the Bush administration, which just a week ago focused on the economy, education, and the Social Security lockbox, will surely hinge on how well it fights this war, which means at the moment whether the U.S. military can kill bin Laden.

With bin Laden dead, we will no doubt see again Americans slaughtered by Islamic holy warriors. But when we down him and take back the awe that is ours, we will have turned the tide. After that, we will just have to persevere and slowly burn the hope out of Islam's holy warriors.

The painful integration of the Muslim and Western worlds, which has been relentlessly moving forward for more than two hundred years, will then continue, God willing, with less bloodshed on both sides. ♦

Illustration by Kevin Chadwick

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The Will to Win

Our wars are always a test of who we are.

By Jeffrey Bell

My two years as a U.S. Army draftee expired, as it happened, during the Tet offensive, in early February 1968. The South Vietnamese Army base in the Mekong Delta I had called home for eleven months was attacked, but not with any great effectiveness, so when the time came to return to civilian life I was picked up by a helicopter and ferried to Tan Son Nhut airfield for the flight home.

That huge airfield near Saigon had been the objective of a strong North Vietnamese attack, the scars of which were still visible. The enemy had been ejected, but sporadic mortar attacks caused us to interrupt our paperwork to take cover. When the roll was called for those scheduled to be on the chartered plane to San Francisco, I remember answering "dead" to the name of a sergeant from my operational area who I knew would not be making this flight or any other. Yet the flight left on time.

The Pentagon

AP, Wide World Photos

Thirty-three years later, there came a day when no passenger flights were leaving Washington on schedule, or at all. The next day, to get to my office, I drove past the largest fire I have ever seen, burning in the Pentagon. I had driven past the same spot nearly 24 hours earlier, one hour before a hijacked commercial airliner smashed into this vast building, the awesome symbol of American military power.

For all the many differences in content and context between the Tet offensive and the attack on September 11, there is a fundamental element in common: the motive. The aim of last week's enemy assault was identical to that of January-February 1968: by a coordinated, surprise attack few thought possible, to break the political will of the United States, in order to achieve their war aims.

By the time Saigon fell more than seven years after Tet, I knew I had been a minor witness to the most damaging attack on United States forces since World War II. Nothing I saw, or subsequently learned, justified such a verdict on military grounds. But successful psychological warfare has a logic of its own.

The logic starts with its effect on the political leadership of the target nation. In 1968, with President Lyndon Johnson and Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford, the effect desired by the enemy could hardly have been more fully realized. Within weeks, Johnson, the leader and symbol of the American war effort, had dropped out of the presidential race and turned the bulk of policy over to Clifford, who had favored a negotiated American withdrawal even before Tet. The frontrunner for the Republican nomination and Johnson's eventual successor, Richard Nixon, had earlier been a hawk, but became at least as much of a Vietnam pessimist as Clifford, in part because of Tet. The man Nixon picked after the election as his preeminent foreign policy adviser, Henry Kissinger, favored a U.S. withdrawal slow enough to provide a "decent interval" before what he saw as the virtually inevitable collapse of the government in Saigon.

All historians of the period write about the breaking of American will. But many write as if the breakdown in national will had been universal, and make hardly any distinction between the will of political elites and the will of ordinary voters. This makes it awkward for them to explain why our nation's Vietnam debate lasted another seven years, or why in 1972 voters showed every sign of preferring Nixon's war policy to that of George McGovern—or why a candidate could be elected in a landslide in 1980 even after making the "gaffe" of calling America's losing effort in the war a "noble cause."

The question of the sustainability of the American war effort in Vietnam after 1968 is a complex one. There is no way to know whether the American people could have been rallied to victory, because none of the presidents who served in the relevant years made any serious attempt to rally them.

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The American people are now in a mood to rally behind President Bush in the aftermath of September 11. The dramatic, heart-stopping success of the enemy's strike at our military assets and our people, which far exceeds Tet and rivals Pearl Harbor, makes it easier for the popular will to be deeply engaged.

After all, history suggests there is nothing like stark, violent aggression to make a military buildup politically feasible. At the dawn of the Cold War, North Korea's invasion of South Korea led to a prompt tripling of our defense budget. In the 1970s, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter said little as a succession of countries fell under Communist control in the wake of our defeat in Indochina. It was the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan—the first (and, it turned out, only) deployment of the Red Army beyond the boundaries of the Warsaw Pact—that triggered a tectonic shift in U.S. public opinion and among U.S. elites, paving the way for the Reagan buildup.

What now? There is a strong case for a declaration of war by the United States, a step we haven't taken or even seriously considered since 1941. The scale of the violence, as well as its unprovoked nature, make such a step as appropriate as it was after Pearl Harbor.

The most frequently cited arguments against a declaration of war—how do we define our enemy, and what can we list as our war aims?—are possibly the best arguments in favor of a decision by President Bush to ask Congress for a declaration of war. For the debate on a declaration has a good chance of forcing us to decide what this war is about.

What our wars are about always winds up having a lot to do with who we are. And the most banal, yet most salient, aspect of who we are—the world's leading example and advocate of democracy—goes a long way to explaining the continuity of American foreign policy, and why, again and again, the pronouncement that a foreign policy era is over has proved premature.

The end of World War I, for example, was the end of an era for the Hohenzollerns, the Habsburgs, the Romanovs, and the Ottomans. In fact, it was the end of the era of ruling monarchy. But despite our opting out of the League of Nations, it did not prove to be the end of an era for U.S. foreign policy.

The end of World War II was the end of an era for the Nazis, the Fascists, and Shintoist militarism. It did not prove to be the end of an era for U.S. foreign policy.

The generation or so after World War II proved to be the end of an era for the far-flung overseas empires of Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Portugal. It did not prove to be the end of an era for U.S. foreign policy.

The end of the Cold War was the end of an era for the Soviet Union and its 15 federated republics, for the nations of the Warsaw Pact, for Albania, and (with an ugly, unpleasant lag) Yugoslavia. It is not proving to be the end of an era for U.S. foreign policy.

From the beginning, long before we had the military reach to do much about it, American presidents thought of America's foreign influence in terms of the global spread of the idea of political equality, that is, of democratic self-government. Jefferson believed it. Jackson believed it. Lincoln believed it. Despite all the efforts of reductionists, economic determinists, and neo-realists from John C. Calhoun to Charles Beard to Henry Kissinger, this universal aspiration has never really been absent from America's self-image, or from the foreign policy of the United States, for more than a brief span of time.

Today, the neo-realists inform us that Arabs, or sub-Saharan black Africans, or Confucian-influenced Chinese cultures, are incapable of democracy. As Max Boot has put it, this Kissingerian mode of analysis "boils down to little more than the proposition that the absence of democracy in a country means democracy is not relevant there." The Arabs, black Africans, and Chinese can rest assured: Nothing is being said about them that was not said about Germany, Italy, and Japan 60 years ago, or about Ireland 120 years ago.

In some deep, unarguable sense, America's worst enemies are right. Our nation is a kind of wrecking ball that seeks out the despots, oligarchs, and genocidal maniacs of the world, whoever they happen to be or whatever they are calling themselves at any given time. That is why there is more of a feeling of continuity than discontinuity from Pearl Harbor to the Tet offensive to the appalling events of Tuesday, September 11, 2001.

And that, in turn, points out how a serious national debate on a congressional declaration of war could help us clarify the nature of our peril and better define our war aims. If the president and Congress decide we are in a "wholly new" war with something called "terrorism," we will be falling short of where we need to be. Terrorism on the scale we have just witnessed could not happen without the active instigation of nation-states. We could end suicide hijackings, even in some sense "defeat" terrorism, only to learn our enemies have moved on to a far more lethal phase of their battle plan.

Military methods have changed and will change, but the challenge facing American foreign policy has not. We are the nemesis of the world's mass murderers and dictators because we are the archetypal, irreplaceable democracy. Whenever we show signs of forgetting this, our enemies will be sure to remind us. ♦

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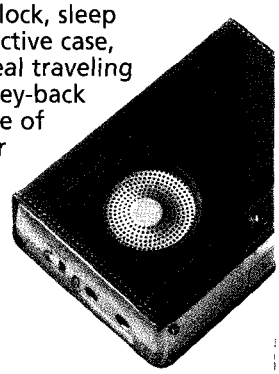

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Joan Didion. CORBIS.

Her American Fictions

The essays of Joan Didion

By CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

Her politics are leftish, and her hottest tirades are reserved for Ronald Reagan, Newt Gingrich, and both George Bushes. But the novelist Joan Didion voted for Barry Goldwater in 1964—"ardently," by her own account—and swears that "had Goldwater remained the same age and continued running, I would have voted for him in every election thereafter." *Political Fictions*, which collects eight essays she has written for the *New York Review of Books* since the 1988 election, shows why we ought to believe her.

Political Fictions
by Joan Didion
Alfred A. Knopf, 352 pp., $25

What's Goldwateresque about Didion is a pleasantly riling populist paranoia, an anachronistic belief that America is run by credentialed East Coast pointy-heads who are venal, snooty, and wholly ignorant of the life of the country. For her, there is an establishment of politicians, journalists, and various money men and hangers-on that is willing both to bamboozle the American citizenry and, effectively, to rig elections to keep power. Abysmal voter turnout is to be understood not as evidence of voters' apathy but as a sort of sit-down strike to protest their "vassal relationship" to the governing class. This relationship, referred to throughout as "the disconnect," is for Didion the hammer that makes everything look like a nail. When in November 2000, the presidential election wound up in the hands of state judges and Supreme Court justices, she found that "the events in question were in many ways not only entirely predictable but entirely familiar."

Didion is exercised by not just the big frauds of policy but also the smaller frauds of campaign rhetoric and public relations that make them possible. George H. Bush took a 1986 trip to the Middle East solely for the purpose of gathering campaign footage, playacting at looking through binoculars into "enemy territory" (which turned out—probably by an accident—to be Israel). His advance team even requested that the Jordanian army marching band change its uniforms from white to red. In 1988, Michael Dukakis staged daily baseball-tosses on various airport tarmacs—not because he felt like throwing a ball around, but because his campaign could trust a news-hungry press corps to collude in the lie Dukakis was somehow a regular guy.

For Didion, the *Washington Post*'s Bob Woodward typifies this kind of journalistic lapdoggery, with his books "in which measurable cerebral activity is virtually absent," his "cryogenic" interviews, and his unwillingness to correct or contradict his sources lest anyone accuse him of being "unfair." Journalists use fairness, Didion claims, as a synonym for "a scrupulous passivity, an agreement to cover the story not as it is occurring but as it is presented, which is to say as it is manufactured." These are the grounds on which Didion lumps Washington journalists in with the political establishment. She's right to.

The distortion, however, goes beyond showbiz and propaganda. It affects the way Americans are ruled. And it's here, in seeking to explain how, that Didion stops proving and

Christopher Caldwell is senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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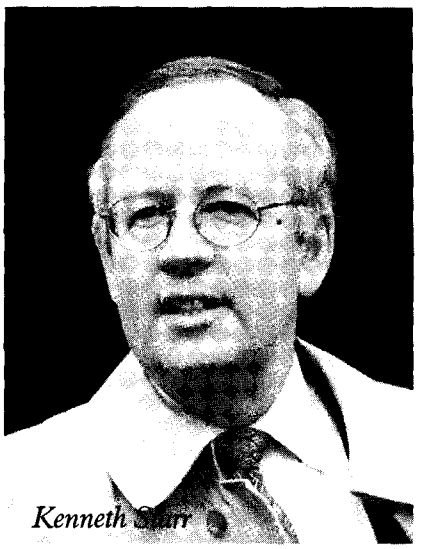
AP / Wide World Photos

Barry Goldwater

Bill Clinton


Kenneth Starr

starts asserting. For her, both parties' move to the right in the last decade—Democrats towards "middle-class" centrism, Republicans towards "values" issues—is evidence of a conscious strategy to narrow the range of discussible political issues and the range of voters along with it. Doubtless, this shift has changed all of American politics, but three episodes appear to Didion as milestones: Bill Clinton's campaign as a "New Democrat," Republican efforts to impeach him, and the bipartisan embrace of George Bush's inchoate "compassionate conservatism" in the last election.

While Didion is way out on a limb here, her prose—euphonious and scalpel-sharp—is still as elegant as it was when everyone began to rave about it four decades ago, even if her tricks are now sufficiently familiar that her fans will see them coming a mile off. Her mania for listing, for instance. Just as Didion the novelist can give the biography of a character by cataloguing the contents of her purse, Didion the political essayist damns Newt Gingrich beyond rescue simply by listing the megalomaniacal business-meatball chapter headings of his books and videos:

> There were "Seven key aspects" and "Nine vision-level principles" of "Personal Strength," Pillar Two of American Civilization. There were "Five core principles" of "Quality as Defined by Deming" (Pillar Five); there were "Three Big Concepts" of "Entrepreneurial Free Enterprise," Pillar Three. . . . No piety can long escape inclusion in one or another of Mr. Gingrich's five or four or eleven steps.

What's more, like Thomas Carlyle and Gore Vidal, she has a gift for torquing up a political drama until it drives the reader into hysterics. This is an oratorical, even a demagogic, power. She writes breaking news in the past tense, uses elaborate and jarringly formal epithets, and has a taste for Biblical parallelisms, creating a Valkyrian melodrama around even the most unimportant bureaucratic and organizational struggles. Didion throws up her hands at Clinton's decision in 1992 not to confine his appeal exclusively to destitute welfare recipients, per time-honored Democratic practice. When he comes off a plane with too many Caucasians for Didion's taste and describes himself and his entourage as "America," she explodes: "He said this in a summer during which one American city, Los Angeles, had already burned. He said this in another American city, New York, that had a week before in Washington Heights come close to the flashpoint at which cities burn. This was a year in which 944,000 American citizens and businesses filed for bankruptcy. . . . This was a year in which 213,000 jobs vanished in the city of New York alone. . . . This was a year in which . . . " Etc., etc. What gets lost in this rant is that Clinton was running not to embody the problems Didion describes, but to fix them.

Didion has a keen, almost neurasthenic, sensitivity to idiom—which makes her slanted reporting of other people's slang particularly untrustworthy. She claims to believe the country at large is "referred to, in Washington and among those whose preferred locus is Washington, as 'out there.'" (I've lived here twelve years and never heard that.) Insiders in Washington, she notes, "talk about 'programs,' and 'policy,' and how to 'implement' them or it, about 'tradeoffs' and constituencies and positioning the candidate and distancing the candidate, about the 'story' and how it will 'play.'" (Jargon, yes, but how does it differ from that of the average small business-owner in Missoula, Montana?)

At the 1988 Democratic National Convention, she claims, "the nets packed with balloons swung gently overhead, poised for that instant known as 'the money shot,' the moment, or 'window,' when everything was working and no network had cut to a commercial." (My apologies for knowing this, but isn't "money shot" a porn-movie term?) And to Washington-media protestations that Bill Clinton was an embarrassment to families sitting around the television, she counters that, for Middle America, Kenneth Starr was the real villain: "The person most people seemed not to want in their living rooms any more was 'Ken' (as he was now called by

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those with an interest in protecting his story)." (Starr was called "Ken" even by those who hated him. He was "Ken" even to Geraldo Rivera.)

The more Didion rails against Washington's remoteness from "the American people," the vaguer she gets about who those people might be. The Republican pols and Washington journalists who sought Bill Clinton's impeachment (decidedly including THE WEEKLY STANDARD, which she singles out for excoriation) "were not talking about Americans at large. They did not know Americans at large."

So what part of the *demos* does Didion tap into for a control sample? "I recall having dinner, the weekend before the California primary," she writes, "at the Pebble Beach house of the chairman of a large American corporation." And later: "On the evening of the November 1988 election and on several evenings that followed, I happened to sit at dinner next to men with considerable experience in the financial community." Later she notes that, while campaigning for president in New York, former California governor Jerry Brown "camped one night at a homeless shelter and other nights at my husband's and my apartment." This may be bragging, or it may be "full disclosure"—but what it's not is a sounding of the *vox populi*.

In its place is an old-timey, they're-all-a-buncha-bums populist rhetoric, the endpoint of which is always logical inconsistency. Take Clinton. Didion despised him during the 1992 primaries as one who exuded "the familiar predatory sexuality of the provincial adolescent," right down to "the narrowing of the eyes, as in a wildlife documentary." He was opportunistic—or corrupt—enough to execute the brain-damaged black murderer Ricky Ray Rector and to appear at Stone Mountain Correctional Facility in Georgia with Sam Nunn and a chain gang of forty black prisoners. Such stunts bespoke not just a personal sleaziness but a willingness to serve as front-man for a lying Democratic party, which was putting all its eggs in the basket of (racist, Didion assumes) "Reagan Democrats," while trying to hold their black base. "A candidate bent on at once luring the former and holding the latter," Didion notes, "will predictably be less than entirely forthcoming on certain points."

Monica Lewinsky's appearance in 1998 was only a last straw, a proximate cause of Clinton's troubles. The impeachment crisis happened because the number of Americans nursing exactly such pent-up grievances as

Ted Streshinsky / CORBIS

Joan Didion in 1967.

Didion's over Clinton's inability to tell the truth had grown extraordinarily vast and diverse. But since it turned out to be vast and diverse enough to include at least part of official and media Washington, Didion made an about-face. She objects even to the *Washington Post*'s call for censure so the public could have "a clear record and a clear statement of the standard of conduct—the expectations—that this president has violated by the lying to escape being held to account that is a hallmark of his career." That is, she damns the *Post* for finding unpalatable the same truth-shading she found unpalatable in 1992.

Didion's impatience with the anti-Clintonites of 1998 may have to do with her unusual idea that the contemporary American "values agenda" is being pushed by Northeastern elites. Her evidence here seems to consist of Sally Quinn's mid-impeachment *Washington Post* article about how Bill Clinton never quite fit in among the Georgetown party set, and a few transcripts of *This Week* that show the talking heads unanimous in their outrage. But, then, during an attack on George Bush's "compassionate conservatism," Didion shifts gears, and her zeal to demonstrate that the values agenda is *wrong* gets in the way of her showing that it's an elite con job:

> In a country already so increasingly steeped in evangelical teaching that a significant number of its citizens had come to believe that "God created man pretty much in his present form at one time within the last ten thousand years" (forty-seven percent of Americans surveyed by Gallup in 1991 said they believed in such a fell swoop, or "recent special creation"), those who wrote and spoke were arguing about how the nation's political system could best revive those religious values allegedly destroyed (in an interestingly similar fell swoop) during the 1960s.

This would be an excellent point if it were limited to establishing that the last three decades have been not a period of secularization but a period of retheologization. Didion is absolutely right about that. But her data is inconsistent with her claim the heartland "values voter" is a figment of the corrupt Washington elite's self-serving imagination.

Finally, take Didion's larger point that there is at present a historic political "disconnect" between Americans and their representatives, who, during the Clinton impeachment, showed a "casual contempt for the electorate at large." She is right about the impeach-

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ment gap, of course. But the contempt is nothing new. You could even call it part of the human condition. What role did popular sentiment play in American intervention in Kosovo? Partial-birth abortion law? The Panama Canal treaties? Affirmative action? Vietnam? *Brown* v. *Board of Education*? The Yalu River campaign? The Marshall Plan? On the one hand, she despises suggestions during the impeachment drama that Congress "isolate itself from the opinion of the electorate." On the other hand, she doesn't allow a single chapter to pass without a philippic against focus groups, which mimic the opinion of the electorate.

"Not even when the bumper stickers of the John Birch Society were common road sightings," she writes of the American political atmosphere in 1998, "had we been so insistently reminded that this was not a democracy but a republic, or a 'representative form of government.'" Em . . . well, we *are* a republic. How democratic sentiments get transmitted to republican institutions is always complicated and never pretty. But Didion makes not a single suggestion about how that transmission could have been better carried out by Ronald Reagan, Michael Dukakis, Bill Clinton, and Kenneth Starr.

Or "Ken," as I like to call him. ♦

The Contras Were Right

Why the Nicaraguan people resisted the Sandinistas.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

Few ordinary Americans still consider the contras, the Nicaraguan anti-Communist rebels of the 1980s, much of a hot topic. But American leftists, especially among the Democrats of Washington, D.C., haven't forgotten them. The reappearance in George W. Bush's administration of John Negroponte, Otto Reich, and Elliott Abrams—all distinguished veterans of Reagan-era Latin American policy—has resurrected some of the deranged anti-contra rhetoric we last heard in the 1980s.

The Real Contra War
Highlander Peasant Resistance in Nicaragua
by Timothy C. Brown
Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 352 pp., $29.95

In that discourse, the contras were stigmatized in every conceivable manner and virtually every forum. Editorial cartoonists portrayed them as "Frito Bandito" Latins, a caricature that would have brought lynch mobs to the doorsteps of the dailies had it been applied to, say, the Mexican Zapatistas. In *Doonesbury*, the cartoonist Garry Trudeau milked yuks from the fact that a contra commander called himself Comandante Quiche. That the Quiché Indians of Central America are a powerful cultural symbol to indigenous peoples in the region was unknown north of the Rio Grande; it was easy to imagine the contra officer as a quiche-eating dilettante cruising through Washington power parties.

Generic atrocities and crimes were charged against the contras, with no detail forthcoming as to where or when the murders, rapes, and massacres of which they were continuously accused had taken place. Incredibly elaborate legends about drug dealing were spun out through endless embellishment to become common wisdom. And finally, the contras were smeared as mercenaries who had sold themselves for money, commanded by fascist leftovers of the former Somoza dictatorship.

You can find a nice example of all this reheated rhetoric in the *Washington Post*'s recent review of a memoir by Ronald Radosh, which excoriated Radosh for supporting, almost two decades ago, those "terrorist" contras. But now in *The Real Contra War*, Timothy C. Brown, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, has delivered a blow for the truth perceived by Radosh and a handful of other non-Nicaraguans. From 1987 to 1990, Brown was the State Department's senior liaison to the contras, and in the intervening years, he has immersed himself in an anthropological analysis of the indigenous culture of the peasants who served in the main contra force, the *Fuerza Democratica Nicaraguense*.

What he has learned is enlightening: The peasants' defiance of the Sandinista regime reflected a conflict thousands of years old. This long, long war between the highland Chibcha and lowland Nahua Indians (a conquering offshoot of the Aztecs) began before the arrival of the Spanish in the sixteenth century, and it continues today.

In *The Real Contra War*, Brown has chosen to play by the rules of anthropology rather than polemics. It was well known throughout the Sandinista dictatorship that the Marxists in Managua had provoked serious opposition to their rule from the Indians of the Nicaraguan Atlantic Coast. But Brown is the first to demonstrate that the contra movement in north-central Nicaragua also reflected the ancient Indian desire to be left alone. The Nahuas, as a tributary of the totalitarian Aztec empire, built large cities, erected extensive hierarchies, and exported cocoa beans to Mexico, using slave labor.

The Chibchas lived on individual farms, with no state structure. The Nahuas were absorbed by the Spanish to form the lowland population of modern Nicaragua. The Chibchas learned Spanish and adopted Catholicism, but their psychology remained intact—and when the Sandinistas'

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commissars, inspired by Castro's Cuba, arrived to herd the descendants of the original Chibchas into collectives, their reaction was predictable. They rose up and fought back.

A few foreign observers of Nicaragua in the 1980s recognized that the majority of the contras had also opposed the Somoza dictatorship, with many of them—the most famous being the controversial Eden Pastora, or Commander Zero—having served in the Sandinistas' ranks.

But most of them turned against the Sandinistas the instant they perceived the Stalinist drift of the new regime. Indeed, the main lesson of Brown's *The Real Contra War* is that *all* foreigners got the contras wrong, at one level or another.

> The Sandinistas and their sympathizers . . . viewed the [contras] as useful counterrevolutionary foils, the Americans may have seen them as convenient surrogates in a late Cold War skirmish, and [Nicaraguan] civilian politicians may have thought of them as useful stepping stones to power. But the peasants of Nicaragua's highlands saw them as their shield against yet one more in a thousand-year-old string of attempts at subjugation by outsiders.

The ironies present here are staggering. A former Reagan-era State Department official has employed indigenism—the favorite tool of leftists—to argue with great effect that the contras were "freedom fighters" comparable to Crazy Horse and Emiliano Zapata.

For his work in *The Real Contra War*, Timothy C. Brown deserves the highest accolades. Indeed—given that we are not likely to see a quick end to Castro in Cuba, Chavez in Venezuela, the so-called Zapatistas in Mexico, Communist guerrillas in Colombia, leftist adventurers in Argentina, and all the rest of the police-state utopians in Latin America—the book possesses a real urgency. It should be read, and read again, by those who want to judge what old supporters of the contras—like John Negroponte, Otto Reich, and Elliott Abrams—will bring to President Bush's foreign policy. ♦

Building Florida

The colorful architecture of Addison Mizner.

BY MARTIN LEVIN

In the fall of 1999, a musical called *Wise Guys* ran for three weeks at the New York Theater Workshop. It had music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and a starring role for Nathan Lane, but it never made it to Broadway. The title referred to the brothers Addison and Wilson Mizner, luminaries of the 1920s—and it wasn't the first time musical theater had set out to chronicle their lives. Back in the 1950s, producer David Merrick had enlisted Irving Berlin and S.N. Behrman for a play about the Mizners. That didn't make it to Broadway either.

Boca Rococo
How Addison Mizner Invented Florida's Gold Coast
by Caroline Seebohm
Clarkson Potter, 304 pp., $35

Addison was an architect, Wilson was a sometime writer and full-time wit, and the problem the playwrights faced was how to make a modern audience find them interesting. For Sondheim the buildings were the message: "They were all that we had hoped: original, eccentric and humorous," Sondheim said. "Addison was one of the few architects whom Frank Lloyd Wright admired, and you can see why as soon as you enter a Mizner creation. You can sense the fun he had in designing the place."

Addison Mizner arrived in Florida at the flood tide of the austere school of modern architecture as practiced by the likes of Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier. And for a short but spectacular interlude it looked as though he might reverse the tide and put beauty back in the budget. A man of magnetic personality and volcanic talent, Mizner was a super promoter who attracted old money the way the Pied Piper charmed rats. His clients bore the names of Vanderbilt, Belmont, Biddle, Dodge, and the whiskered icons of patent medicine. His board of directors included a du Pont. William Jennings Bryan was a booster. A 1928 book celebrating his work had an adoring (and well-deserved) introduction by Ida Tarbell, the scourge of the robber barons.

Mizner's reputation wavers between two extremes. One biographer finds him a colorful con man, while another sees him as an architectural genius. In the latest work, *Boca Rococo: How Addison Mizner Invented Florida's Gold Coast*, Caroline Seebohm inclines toward the genius category and supplies abundant evidence. Colorful Mizner certainly was. Over six feet tall, weighing 250 pounds, he sometimes went about with a pet monkey on one shoulder and a macaw on the other. You couldn't miss him.

Mizner blew into Palm Beach in 1918, when the landscape was dominated by shingled frame buildings, usually painted "Flagler yellow" (the color favored by Henry Flagler, an earlier Florida developer). Addison's intention was to build a military hospital. But World War I ended before he could get started, and so, instead of a hospital, he designed a club, bankrolled by his friend Paris Singer, the sewing-machine heir. This was the Everglades Club, a stunning replication in the manner of fourteenth-century Spain. In the words of Singer, "the place took the town by storm." It was a heady complex of courtyards, towers, patios, and arches, walled in white stucco and topped with red tiles. It

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Tony Arruza / CORBIS

A Palm Beach home designed by Addison Mizner.

underlined Wilde's familiar axiom that nothing succeeds like excess. And as the author has it, it made Mizner "a conduit of rich people's caprices."

The first client out of the conduit was the Philadelphia financier E.T. Stotesbury, who commissioned a "villa." He was followed by enough paying customers to fill a sumptuous coffee table book of photographs entitled *The Florida Architecture of Addison Mizner*. "He transformed Palm Beach," wrote Alva Johnston in a *New Yorker* profile that inspired Sondheim, "from a rich man's Coney Island to a perpetual world's fair of architecture."

From Palm Beach, Mizner went on to design a paper city on the site of a neighboring sandspit. In its natural state, Boca Raton was a mosquito-infested wasteland. On his drawing board, Mizner turned it into a cross between Venice and the Alhambra. And among the watery network of canals were a host of race tracks, coliseums, casinos, and movie studios. For his own residence, Mizner designed a Spanish fortress, complete with a portcullis, moat, and drawbridge.

To help promote the Boca Raton development, Addison enlisted his brother Wilson, a prolific wit who originated "Never give a sucker an even break" and a bushel of other classic lines usually attributed to the likes of W.C. Fields and Dorothy Parker. Damon Runyon called Wilson "the greatest man-about-town that any town ever had."

The mad run on Florida real estate that the Mizners precipitated ended in 1926, with a collapse as total as the Dutch tulip bubble. The end was signaled by the resignation of T. Coleman du Pont from the Boca Raton directorship. He had discovered that the Mizners were using his name to underwrite blue-sky claims, and he went public with an assault on their integrity.

This precipitated a collapse of confidence. Two months after du Pont's denunciation, *Variety* ran a story under the headline "Florida Slipping," which amounted to an obituary for the biggest real-estate boom in history.

And as if to forestall any chance of recovery, Florida was hit in September 1926 by one of the most destructive hurricanes of the last century, developing winds up to 138 miles per hour. Though it swept away what was left of Addison's prospects, it failed to destroy his legacy. Today, his mystique is more negotiable than ever. Real-estate properties proliferate, bearing his name: Mizner Lake Estates, Addison's Country Club, Mizner Park.

The return of Addison Mizner was certified in 1977, when the governing commission of Miami invited Philip Johnson to design an office building. They may have expected a specimen of the glass box genre from this collaborator on New York's Seagram building. Instead, Johnson dreamed up a stucco and tiled structure that would have been at home in Mizner's Boca Raton.

Along with the Mizner story, Caroline Seebohm's book offers a fresh slant on the cultural climate of the protean 1920s. Intellectuals of the Jazz Age are usually regarded as bitter. "Disillusioned" is the stereotype applied to writers such as Hemingway and Ford Madox Ford. Mizner's clients marched to a different percussionist. They were positive thinkers in a leisure class whose social goal was conspicuous construction. They formed a society so upbeat that one dowager staffed her new mansion with a resident organist. These people were as exotic as the denizens of *Planet of the Apes*. But they did have redeeming social value: They underwrote an original chapter in urban renewal. ◆

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Photos: Oxford University Press.

Yes, She Mae

The bawdy role of Mae West.

BY LISA SINGH

Word has it that Mae West—that "plumber's idea of Cleopatra," as W.C. Fields once wisecracked—haunts her Hollywood estate; her reflection has been seen in the mirrors that in life she approached with the concentration of a card shark. In a world of haves and have-nots, West knew any man could be had; she called them all "suckers." As Broadway's bad girl who brought her play *Sex* to the stage and then as a Hollywood newcomer who at age forty broke box-office records set by Garbo and Dietrich, she shrewdly stuck to her winning formula. "People want dirt in plays, so I give 'em dirt, see?" she told the *New Yorker* in 1928, a few years before she came to the movies, armed with her self-penned scripts, to become the headache of movie censor Will Hays.

Mae West
An Icon in Black and White
by Jill Watts
Oxford University Press, 374 pp., $35

West's idea of dirt, of course, had little to do with any actual sexual performance—but a lot to do with the quick-witted suggestion of it, via well-timed quips and the exaggeration of every bit of her look. Never a true beauty, she was still determined to convey some larger-than-life quality, and reshaped her figure to accomplish this feat. In her Broadway turn as Diamond Lil, for one, she trimmed the top off a standard corset and wore it upside down to emphasize the bust and shoulders over the waist and hips. So successful was she in creating her sexually exaggerated persona that almost anything she said was taken as sexual innuendo. In a 1939 spot on Edgar Bergen's radio show, for instance, she invited dummy Charlie McCarthy to "come up and play in my woodpile"—and was promptly banned from the airwaves.

"People seem to read double meanings into every word I speak," she once said. But nowadays, it's the puritan apostles of race, class, and gender who are scrutinizing Mae West's words. Today, she is increasingly viewed as a cause célèbre: a First Amendment pin-up girl; a campy, vampy icon for gay men; a "complex," "revolutionary" artist challenging a "patriarchal" society. Of course, West—the wisecracking dame who advised gals to "take all you can get and give as little as possible"—deserves more than today's critics' humorless praise. For one thing, she never aimed to change the world. (Take a look at *My Little Chickadee*, in which West plays a pistol-packin' mama whose biggest concern in her shoot-'em-up with Indians is a broken fingernail.)

The daughter of a boxer, West fought her way up from her earliest days in vaudeville. She was at her most successful in such Gay Nineties period pieces as *She Done Him Wrong*, where as Lady Lou, "the finest woman who ever walked the streets," she swaggered and sallied her way through a world of Victorians. Only in an era of deeply entrenched social taboos could her double entendres pack a wallop. (In our own toxic times, her approach is seems merely camp.) West was a firm believer that what you don't show—or say—is more tantalizing than what you do. The result was her word play: "Don't ever let a man put anything over you except an umbrella," "It's better to be looked over than overlooked."

When critics in the late 1960s began calling her early work "thoughtful social commentary," West was all too eager to fuel this new myth. Never one to miss a chance to give the public what it wanted, West played the left-leaning critics as smoothly as she had her vaudeville audiences. When the intelligentsia came knocking, West was ready with the right tune. She heartily endorsed the 1960s slogan "Make

Lisa Singh last wrote for THE WEEKLY STANDARD *on the silent-film director Lois Weber.*

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Love, Not War." "There should be more loving and less fighting," she cooed. When a reporter from *Jet* magazine stopped by her home, she gushed, "I was the first film star to establish a rapport with black maid characters in relationships that were virtually on a peer level." (In her films, her treatment of the black maid includes calling her "shadow" and "eightball.")

Feminists, for their part, had a harder time accepting West; that she disarmed patriarchy by merely exploiting her female attributes didn't sit well with them. But eventually they came around, too, and in 1971, West, a freshly circumcised "phallic woman," donned her corset to accept UCLA's "Woman of the Century" award.

The latest sucker to reinvent West is Jill Watts, an associate history professor at California State University who has written *Mae West: An Icon in Black and White*. Dotting her writing with every tired cliché, Watts asserts that West was a "radically subversive artist" who borrowed heavily from black music, dance, and humor to challenge society's views on race, class, and gender. Watts argues that West accomplished this through an African-American practice of signifying "a subversive rhetorical device that uses multiple and conflicting messages to obscure rebellious meanings." Conveniently, racist elements in West films are explained as the work of a "trickster," using "racism to sabotage racism." Watts infuses every scene with some radical message—even extracting meaning from West's appearance on the 1960s show *Mister Ed*: "Ed and Mae were a good match. They were both tricksters who wreaked havoc on a society they had little power over."

One of Watts's assertions happens to be true: West did borrow from black culture, though not to impart some socially conscious message. Far from being an iconoclast, West bought into the fad of her day, when white fascination with the Harlem Renaissance fueled the stereotype of blacks as more sexual and raw. As a vaudeville performer, West traveled to Chicago's south side, where in the black entertainment district she saw African-American couples dance the shimmy, shaking, as West later recalled, their "shoulders, torsos, breasts and pelvises." In their dance, West said she saw a "naked, aching, sensual agony," and soon she incorporated it into her routine. (Later, in her Hollywood days, press materials described her as "the first white shimmy dancer.")

Watts herself clearly accepts a primitivistic viewpoint, insinuating that West's own potent sexuality may have come from secret black blood. In the first paragraphs of her book, she ventures that West's grandfather, a sailor, may have been black. "Many enslaved African-American sailors took advantage of their mobility and escaped north; some of those were light-skinned," she writes. "While no documents substantiate that [West's grandfather] did, none prove that he did not."

West always loved to recall how she found inspiration for Margy Lamont, her famed prostitute character in *Sex*. Stuck in traffic with a companion, West glanced at the nearby West Side Manhattan waterfront and saw a cheap woman—with frizzy bleached hair, a wrinkled coat, and runs in her stockings—wearing a pricey Bird of Paradise plumed hat, likely the gift of one of the two sailors with their arms around her. West's companion wagered the woman was a streetwalker who got as little as fifty cents a trick. West later recalled: "I kept thinking, 'Fifty cents! How many guys would she have to have to pay her rent, buy her food?' I thought, Jeez, this dame is stupid. I thought if I could only talk to her, she could always get one or maybe two guys to keep her if she was too lazy to work at anything else. . . . I was making her over in my mind."

Mae West eyes Cary Grant in She Done Him Wrong.

Now it's Jill Watts who's trying the same thing on Mae West herself: making her over in her mind. The attempt proves less successful. "Through her immersion in African-American signifying," she writes, the actress "reminds us that all polarities are really constructions of a society that operates to promote and preserve the status quo."

Even in death, Mae West is making suckers of them all. ♦

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The staff of

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mourns the loss of those killed in Tuesday's attack on our nation.

We extend our deepest sympathy to the relatives and friends of those who died September 11, 2001.

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Does Good Business Equal Good Schools?

John E. Chubb is chief education officer, Edison Schools; distinguished visiting fellow, Hoover Institution; and member, Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education.

For more than a decade education policymakers have been convinced that improvements in student achievement depend on comprehensive improvements in schools. The key to greater learning is a not a new reading or math program or having the Internet in every classroom. Learning depends on quality instruction aimed at high standards and attentive to the needs of all students.

Quality instruction is no simple matter. It begins with knowing how to manage a classroom that likely includes a diverse group of students. It continues with knowing what should be taught and how best to teach it. Schools must organize themselves explicitly to set high academic standards, to help teachers with challenging material, and to help students succeed. **Great schools have every element of an effective organization in place, from training to assessment to supervision.**

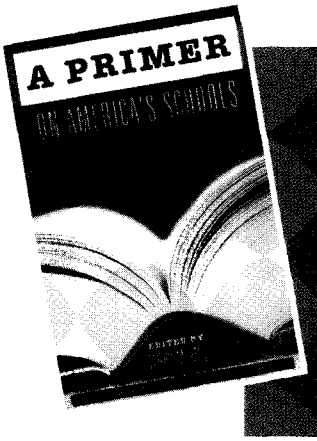
During the 1990s policymakers took a number of initiatives to promote "comprehensive school reform." The Bush administration created the New American Schools Development Corporation to support research into comprehensive school models, such as Modern Red Schoolhouse and Roots and Wings. Congress authorized monies for Title 1 schools that wished to adopt "whole school reform" models. The record of these models in boosting student achievement is mixed. But the disappointments have more to do with the implementation of the models than with the models themselves.

Privatization could advance the accomplishments of school reform dramatically. School reform has foundered over two obstacles. One is money. It can be expensive to make comprehensive changes at a school. A typical school receives money for new curriculum in one major subject area every two years. It receives money to pay for two or three days of teacher training annually. Money for widespread change does not exist, unless it can be raised from a philanthropic grant program or a local bond issue. These are tough ways to spur reform. Businesses, however, could fund comprehensive reform with investment dollars. Edison Schools, for example, invests about $1.5 million in the start-up of each of its schools, earning money back through the course of its contract with its public education client. This money ensures that Edison's comprehensive reform model is launched as effectively as possible. Other firms could bring this advantage to public education as well.

Businesses can also help schools overcome the "buy-in" problem. Comprehensive reform requires the enthusiastic assent and long-term cooperation of every teacher and administrator in the school in which the reform is being pursued. Without this buy-in, the reform breaks down. Teachers begin closing their doors and doing their own thing. Public schools struggle with the buy-in problem for many reasons, not the least of which is that teachers and administrators have rights as public employees and need only cooperate with reform so far. **Being free from the constraints of traditional school systems, however, businesses can reconstitute public schools with teachers and administrators who want to do something different.** Firms have the ability to manage the school toward implementing a contractual reform model that will lead to improved academic results.

— John E. Chubb

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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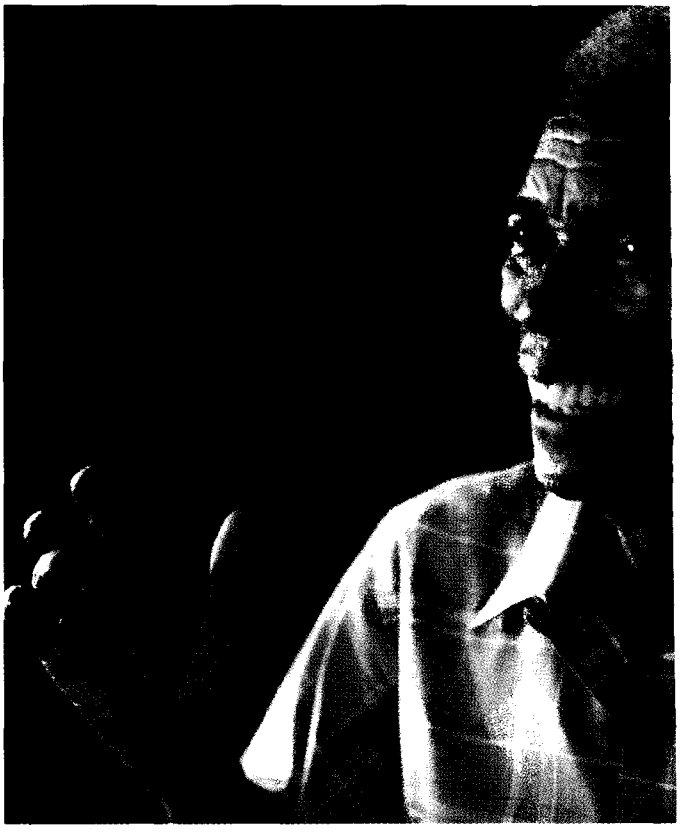

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